DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 374 237 CE 067 137

TITLE	Transitions: Building Partnerships between Literacy Volunteer and Adult Education Programs. Background Papers from the National Conference (Washington, D.C., May 15-17, 1994).
INSTITUTION	National Alliance of Business, Inc., Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	May 94
CONTRACT	VN93010001
NOTE	61p.; For a related document, see CE 067 445.
PUB TYPE	Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Basic Education; Adult Reading Programs; *Articulation (Education); Case Studies; Community Cooperation; Computer Assisted Instruction; Educational Strategies; Educational Technology; *Literacy Education; Models; *Partnerships in Education; Portfolios (Background Materials); *Transitional Programs; *Volunteers

ABSTRACT

This document contains four papers that were written in preparation for a national conference on building partnerships to help adult learners make the transition from volunteer literacy to adult education programs. Discussed in "Technology as an Instruction Strategy for Program Transitions" (Eunice N. Askov, Barbara H. Van Horn) are the characteristics of effective literacy instruction and effective instructional technology, benefits of and barriers to technology as an instructional strategy, computer-assisted instruction, and considerations in using technology as a bridge between literacy and adult education programs. "Setting up Transitional Programs through Effective Collaboration: A Practitioner's Point of View" (Carol Clymer-Spradling) examines the primary transitional players, transitional models and strategies, and a framework for transition and presents a case study for developing a transitional process. Described in "Learner Portfolios to Support Transitions in Adult Education" (Jane Braunger, Sylvia Hart-Landsberg, and Stephen Reder) are the principles of learner-centered instruction and assessment and ways of using portfolios to support transitions in adult education. "Strategies for Building Collaborative Relationships and Articulated Programs" (Judith Alamprese) outlines the elements of effective transition programs, illustrative transition strategies, and state supports for transition programs. (MN)

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TRANSITIONS

Transitions: Building Partnerships Between Literacy Volunteer and Adult Education Programs

Background Papers from the National Conference

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NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

National Alliance of Business
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005

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Prepared under Contract No. VN93010001
for the U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
by the National Alliance of Business

Foreword

The following papers were written in preparation for a national conference that was held in Washington, DC, May 15-17, 1994 entitled *Transitions: Building Partnerships Between Literacy Volunteer and Adult Education Programs.*

This conference was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the National Alliance of Business as part of a year-long project between these two organizations to explore ways that adult learners make the transition from volunteer literacy to adult education programs.

These four papers were written by experts in the field of adult education and literacy. Each paper examines in detail a unique strategy being used in the field today to help improve transitions. The four strategies are: the use of technology; community collaboration; learner portfolios; and articulation.

The authors also presented their papers at the conference during workshops that highlighted the strategy and ways that it is currently being used in the field. The authors revised the papers based on discussions during the workshops and the conference.

The strategies discussed in these papers represent ways that people and programs are helping to improve transitions for adult learners. The techniques used to implement each of these strategies may be unique to a certain program, but the ideas behind them can be applied to many different settings and situations. As the need for lifelong learning continues to grow, building a seamless continuum of adult education services is critically important. Each of the strategies described below is helping to address this need.

For further information on volunteer literacy and adult education programs, please contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education or the National Alliance of Business

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Technology as an Instructional Strategy for Program Transitions

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Eunice N. Askov
Barbara H. Van Horn
Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
The Pennsylvania State University

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TRANSITIONS

Technology as an Instructional Strategy for Program Transitions

Eunice N. Askov
Professor of Education & Director
Barbara H. Van Horn
Assistant Director
Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
The Pennsylvania State University

The recently released report from the Office of Technology Assessment or OTA (U.S. Congress, 1993) portrays the fragmentation of service delivery and the promise of technology to meet the great needs revealed by the National Adult Literacy Survey (Kirsch, Jungeblut, Jenkins, & Kolstad, 1993). Implicit in the OTA report is the lack of coordination between the volunteer sector, providing primarily one-to-one tutoring, and publicly funded adult basic education, usually offering group instruction by a paid instructor. The OTA report recommends governmental and private expenditures for technology to deliver services to all the adults in need regardless of the type of program.

This paper addresses how providers can use instructional and communications technology to assist adult learners in making the transition from volunteer literacy programs to adult basic education classes. As background to this discussion, effective literacy instruction that is relevant and meaningful to adult students, regardless of the type of service provision, will be described. Then, the focus will be on using technology to deliver effective literacy instruction and facilitate communication among adult educators teaching in and learners participating in both literacy and adult basic education programs

Effective Literacy Instruction

Sometimes called learner-centered instruction, good literacy instruction focuses on what students want and need to learn rather than on a predetermined, generic curriculum usually delivered by a commercial set of materials. Also called the "functional context" approach to instruction (Sticht, 1987), where the context of basic skills instruction is relevant and meaningful to learners, good literacy instruction has these characteristics:

- Adults are goal-oriented. Functional context instruction is motivating to the learner because it is meaningful and relevant to the adult student's goals and needs. Harman (1985) suggests that "hard-to-reach" adults are best reached in programs where literacy is not the main goal but a tool to reach other goals. Functional context instruction has more intrinsic value to the learner than learning basic skills without a relevant context (Sticht, 1987).
- With prior knowledge and life experience, workers can read and interpret job-related materials at higher levels than they can read non-job-related materials (Diehl & Mikulecky, 1980). Similarly, adults, using their background knowledge and experience, can read more difficult materials that are relevant to their families, culture, neighborhoods, and other aspects of their lives. The terminology is familiar and the concepts are those used daily. Thus, if a program aims to improve work-related literacy skills, for example, it would be counterproductive for learners to work with generic materials when they could be working at a higher level with job-related materials.

Effective literacy instruction that is relevant to adults' background knowledge and experience provides a framework for discussing technology as a strategy for transitions. The next consideration is the characteristics of technology that meet the learning needs of adults who are making the transition from volunteer programs to adult basic education classes. The benefits as well as the barriers to using technology have been discussed in the research literature (Askov & Clark, 1991; Mansoor, 1993; Turner, 1993; U.S. Congress, 1993); they are summarized here.

Benefits of Technology as an Instructional Strategy

The research literature reports the following benefits of using instructional technology:

Privacy. Only the adult and his/her teacher or tutor need to know the actual level of instruction. Once the adult learner can operate the computer, he/she can work independently without anyone's knowledge (other than the teacher or tutor) of the appropriate level of difficulty.

Individualization. Instruction can be tailored to the adult learner's needs rather than to those of the group. The teacher or tutor can individualize not only the pace of learning but also the content and presentation to the needs and interests of the individual adult learner.

Achievement Gains. Some research studies have demonstrated better than average gains through use of technology (for example, Askov, Maclay, & Bixler, 1992). Although Clark (1983) cautions appropriately that achievement gains may not be related to the medium of instruction but to the content, adoption of technology causes teachers to rethink the curriculum which is positive and generally leads to better instruction (Papagiannis, Douglas, Williamson, & LeMon, 1987).

Cost Effectiveness. An extensive evaluation (Turner & Stockdill, 1987) of an urban technology/literacy center revealed that delivering instruction through computers is no more expensive than traditional instruction with advantages in achievement gains. In fact, more learners than originally anticipated could be served through using technology in instruction.

Control of Learning. The adult learner gradually takes control of the learning situation as he/she learns how to use the technology. Askov and Brown (1988) and Lewis (1988) documented changes in attitudes toward oneself as an adult learner. Controlling technology seems to lead to a sense of empowerment for low-literate individuals who often feel that they have little control over their own lives.

Open Entry-Open Exit. While classes may operate on a regular schedule, it is common for adult learners to need flexibility in scheduling. Instructional use of technology enables teachers and tutors to start where learners leave off, saving valuable time for both. Records can be easily stored on computer disks, offering a confidential and convenient means of retaining student achievement data.

Modern Way to Learn. Technology is revolutionizing the workplace; business/industry/labor organizations look to technology to upgrade the learning skills of workers. A certain faith in technology exists in the modern mind (Turkle, 1984). This faith can help adult learners overcome feelings of inadequacy as they approach the task of learning basic skills as adults (Lewis, 1988). Use of computers, in particular, can also build comfort and familiarity with computers — computer literacy — as well as basic skills instruction.

Barriers to Technology as an Instructional Strategy

Some barriers exist to using technology. A survey of state directors of adult education (Askov & Means, 1993) revealed that the greatest barriers to using computers were funding and staff development. These and other barriers are discussed as problems in using technology as an instructional strategy in assisting adults to make program transitions.

Change. Technology is constantly changing. What seemed "state of the art"

several years ago is now "primitive." Continual upgrading is necessary to take advantage of the best that technology has to offer.

Cost. Costs are a major barrier to purchasing technology for instruction. Unless some type of federal and/or state funding is earmarked for technology, purchases are difficult, particularly for volunteer programs, even though costs are coming down.

Pressure to Make Rapid Decisions. Money for technology sometimes comes from an unexpected "windfall," leaving little time to make informed decisions. Instead of careful planning which should precede innovation, administrators must "use it or lose it"; they may fall prey to a sharp salesperson who may not have the best interests of students in mind.

Lack of Expertise. A trained resource person needs to be available to set up the equipment, fix malfunctions when they occur, and, most importantly, train teachers and tutors in the use of the technology. This resource person also needs to keep up with what is happening in not only technology but also adult literacy to keep equipment upgraded and materials current.

Lack of Training. Unfortunately, when program administrators decide to adopt technology, especially computers for instruction, usually the first consideration is hardware and then software. Only after those decisions are made does the realization come that teachers and tutors need to be trained. Instead of training being the first step, it is often an afterthought.

Inappropriate Instruction. Much of the currently available computer software is designed for children. However, it may be used with adults with adaptations and care in the way it is presented. Many of the instructional games can be used if the graphics are not too obviously childish. As more funding is becoming available for adult instructional programming, vendors are producing more appropriate materials.

Curriculum Integration. It takes time for any innovation to be adapted and adopted in a local program. Similarly, use of a new technology is often viewed as a special event rather than part of the ongoing curriculum. Teachers and tutors must become so familiar with the instructional materials offered via the technology that these materials can become part of the instructional choices routinely available to students.

Role Changes. When adult learners use technology, and have control over their personal learning agendas, they become more independent, even self-actualizing. Sometimes teachers and tutors feel displaced by the technology. Training can overcome these feelings of displacement and give tutors a viable and important role in instruction.

The benefits are mostly related to the adult learners; the barriers are mostly program-related. As states contemplate using instructional technology as a strategy to assist adults in making the transition from volunteer to adult basic education programs, what unique contribution does technology offer?

Technology as Empowerment and a Bridge

Technology can empower adults to take control of their own learning. Of course, technology can deliver poor literacy instruction; it is only the vehicle for delivering instruction. When technology offers effective literacy instruction, as defined above, it empowers adult learners; they become responsible for their learning progress. They develop positive attitudes toward learning, not only for instruction through technology, but for all forms of learning. They feel affirmed not only as learners but also as individuals. As Mr. White, an inmate — and a beginning reader — at a state correctional institution, said, as he picked up and literally hugged the computer he had been working on, "I'm right! I know I'm right!" It was, perhaps, the first time he had been successful in a learning situation. Technology that affirms the learners empowers them.

When adults are affirmed and empowered by their own learning successes, the transition from one learning environment to another is not as stressful. As long as the technology is available for the learners, it is the remaining, familiar constant when transition occurs. It functions as a bridge from one program to

another; however, the instructor is still important.

Role of the Instructor in Using Technology

Instead of feeling threatened or replaced by technology, instructors — teachers and tutors — need to consider their new roles. The instructor is still essential to mediate between the technology and the learners. Learners need assistance and additional practice even with the best technologically delivered instruction. Teachers and tutors become facilitators more than direct deliverers of instruction providing opportunities for learners to practice transferring new learning to different situations and encouraging the development of metacognitive (learning how to learn) skills. These two areas - transfer of learning and development of metacognitive skills - are key to successfully transitioning adult learners from one type of program to another.

Learners need help in transferring the instruction delivered by technology into their daily lives. Instructors can provide the linkage and transfer from the technology to application in learners' lives. For example, a software package may provide an introduction to and practice in calculating with fractions - ideally, this instruction would be offered in a practical context, such a revising recipes or comparing drill bit sizes. Adult learners, then, may use the software to practice this math skill; the instructor can assist the learners in adapting their favorite recipes using fractional units or comparing actual drill bits of different sizes (Which is larger—3/8 or 7/16?). Practice in applying skills learned in one environment (technology-based) to a different one (daily living) builds adult learners' capacity for meeting new learning challenges more successfully.

Instructors can also help learners develop their metacognitive skills while using technology. In fact, some kinds of technology are ideal for learning and practicing higher level skills that the NALS (Kirsch, Jungeblut, Jenkins, & Kolstad, 1993) revealed were lacking in approximately half the population. Research (for example, Baker & Brown, 1984) reveals that learners who have developed their metacognitive skills are more successful in reading; these learners should have less difficulty with transition from a volunteer tutoring program to adult basic education classes.

For example, tutors and teachers using technology can ask learners what they already know about the subject they are about to study and what they need to learn. They can query learners about whether or not they have enough information to answer questions and solve problems delivered by the technology. In addition, they can encourage learners to think about what they need to know to learn new information from their reading and encourage them to become problem solvers in their literacy studies, using reading and writing as reciprocal processes. Instructors also can encourage learners to discuss what they are learning and learn to listen to others' points of views.

Characteristics of Effective Instructional Technology

Technology that is effective will empower learners and help them make the transition from one literacy program type to another. Technology that can help with transitions should have the following characteristics (Baker & Bixler, 1990; Bixler & Spotts, 1992). While this discussion primarily pertains to computer-assisted instruction (CAI), most of the points are also applicable to other types of technology.

Interactivity. Learners do not learn passively but through active engagement (Tennyson, 1990). If video and television are used for basic skills instruction, they should be accompanied by discussion and practice activities. The advantage of video is that it may be stopped at any point which enhances possibilities of interactivity.

Feedback. Learners need to know whether or not their responses are correct. Feedback should be non-judgmental and private. For example, software that produces a squeak or a buzz when the wrong answer is selected is not advised. Learners should be given an explanation of why an answer is correct, even

if they answered correctly, since they may have guessed.

Learner Control. The ability to stop an instructional program at any time and to start again where the learner left off is essential in creating technology that is learner controlled and individualized (Gay, 1986). Some software, for example, that is designed for young children yet used with beginning adult readers does not permit the user to exit the program until it is completed. This feature erodes the learners' self-concepts by letting the technology, rather than the learners, control the pace and delivery of instruction.

Learner-Controlled Accessories. Navigational tools, such as arrows that return learners to the previous screen or back to the menu, are empowering to adults. A built-in dictionary which learners can access at any time presents a word, provides the definition of the word, and uses the word contextually in a sentence. A word processor that learners can access at any point during a lesson enables them to record notes about and reactions to the lesson, enhancing metacognitive abilities. Learners should be asked to comment on any difficulties they experienced, aspects of the lesson that they enjoyed, and so forth.

Directions and Help. One element many low-literate adult learners share is difficulty in following directions. Directions should be always visible or easily accessible. Learners are prompted step-by-step through difficult exercises. An on-line "help" button should always be available to learners who are confused or forget the directions. The use of speech synthesizers and digitizers is useful for beginning readers to receive aural directions, help, and reinforcement. If speech is an impossibility, instruction for beginning adult readers or non-native speakers should be designed to use the computer as a tool with the teacher or tutor.

Consistency. Placement of directions and graphics on the screen should be consistent wherever possible. Common phrases for all directions should be used. Graphics should appear in the same general area on the screen in sequential exercises where new graphics may replace previous graphics. Providing an explicit organization increases the memorability of new material (Bower, 1970).

Organization. Title screens should notify the learner when a new section is being presented (Murray, 1989). Summary screens inform the learner that a section is finished. Summary screens should also organize and provide a synopsis of the material presented. Instructional segments should be short to accommodate attention spans that may be short. Dividing instruction into modules, units, and subunits gives adults a sense of accomplishment; finished sections should be displayed in the record-keeping system for both instructors and adult learners to see.

Graphics. Literacy instruction that incorporates simple but appealing graphics provides cues to meaning and assists in learning (Bean, Singer, Sorter, & Frazee, 1986). Furthermore, attractive graphics keep the learners' attention focused on the task (Hannafin & Peck, 1988). In CAI screens should be "sparse" in terms of verbal and content density wherever possible. Screens that are clutter-free, without unnecessary details, allow the learners to concentrate on the concept intended. Simple line drawings without any extra detail, shading, or fill patterns enhance a concept. The use of large print fonts also limits the amount of information placed on one screen, and it may be more readable for older adults.

Assessment and Recordkeeping. Diagnostic and mastery tests that are built into the technology are extremely useful when learners move from one type of program to another. The tracking system should inform learners of the materials and activities to review before proceeding, and whether or not learners should seek outside assistance.

Customization. If possible, technology should be open-ended to allow instructors to enter their own materials, such as words, definitions, and sentences. Customization allows the technology to be designed by the instructor to fit the unique needs of particular students. Some commercial CAI programs offer the customization feature not only for instruction but also assessment.

Instructor's Manual. A detailed, graphically-oriented manual is essential, preferably one that displays what the learners are seeing in the technology. Since inadequate staff training is often a problem, a well-written manual in non-technical language is essential.

Computer Software for Instruction

Schank (1994) discusses "natural learning" using technology that simulates the real world, offering instruction in a simulated environment. In contrast to outmoded methods used in early CAI, simulations take on a problem-solving approach so that learners are engaged rather than passive recipients.

Five types of computer software exist: Drill and practice, games, tutorials, simulations, and problem solving. Most software on our shelves is drill and practice because old hardware could not run anything else. Expanded memory capabilities now permit simulations and problem-solving software. With costs coming down, programs are advised to purchase new equipment. The old hardware is still useful for running drill and practice exercises which are needed for reinforcement.

Simulations are possible now on the newer, more powerful computers. For example, we can now simulate the work environment; it is easier and less expensive to have learners work in a simulated environment where mistakes do not cost anything. Learners have privacy and freedom to experiment. Through computer simulations they are able to apply their new skills to their daily lives (in a simulated environment), enhancing transfer of skills. Computer simulations act as a bridge between classroom learning and the real world.

Simulations require learners to apply their basic skills; learners should be able to access tutorials whenever they need skills instruction. Ideally, they should be able to suspend the simulation and move into the tutorial, using software navigational tools. The tutorials should contain critical thinking and problem solving as well as drill and practice. Then they can return to the simulation and apply the basic skills that they have just learned.

An example might help. The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State has been developing simulations for workplace/workforce literacy for about seven years. The job tasks that a worker must do are determined by task analysis; then basic skills are related to those job tasks. One job task for maintenance workers, for example, is painting a room. The computer simulates the entry-level worker arriving for the day, reading the supervisor's memo with instructions for the day, measuring and calculating the area of the room to be painted, figuring out how much paint is needed by reading the paint can label, selecting the correct tools, taking safety precautions indicated on the label, and so forth. At any point that the learners do not know how to do a job task, such as calculating the area of the room, they can interrupt the scenario to receive contextually appropriate instruction in a tutorial. (In other words, area is taught in the context of wall measurements.) At the end of the module the learner is given a Manager's Training Report showing successfully and unsuccessfully completed job tasks. Learners take control of their own learning. They determine when and if they need tutorials. If they do not select a tutorial when they do not know how to apply a skill, they will probably not succeed at the job tasks. It is just like the real work world, but mistakes don't cost wasted paint!

Interactive videodisk and CD-ROM technologies offer the opportunity to use video clips instead of computer simulations. The disadvantage is that shooting video is very expensive; however, existing video footage can be used with the computer interface. Interactive Knowledge of Charlotte, NC, has been using both these technologies to create adult literacy software, especially for the textile industries.

Simple word processing, data base, and spreadsheet programs can also be used to tailor instruction to the needs of individual learners. Publications, such as Pollak (1989), can guide teachers in how to use these tools in adult literacy instruction. *Keystrokes for*

Literacy, offered in **Playing to Win** centers in Boston and New York, teaches these computer skills along with literacy skills.

Teachers might start reviewing software by looking for different types of programs, keeping in mind that no software program will be universally useful to the needs of all individual learners and all literacy programs. Droms (1992) offers useful suggestions for evaluating software. Also the annual software evaluations (Wright, 1993) of the northwestern states are extremely valuable since learners as well as teachers evaluate the software each year. The Washington County Skill Center (Abbingdon, VA) also produces software reviews including comments from both instructors and learners.

Communication technology provides new possibilities for instruction. Electronic mail offers opportunities for literacy tutorial students to communicate with other students in adult basic education classes. Not only are their reading and writing skills improved through using electronic mail, but they can also find out about instruction in the group setting. Electronic mail also is an easy way for tutors to communicate with teachers about the learners who are making the transition from one program to another.

Assessment and Recordkeeping

One of the great strengths of CAI over other technologies is its ability to track a learner's progress. If learners work together in pairs or in a small group on a computer, their progress can be tracked as a group. Assessments can occur individually so that individual records can be kept, but instruction can be offered for the pair or group.

Computer record-keeping is ideal for learners in transition between programs. If a diagnostic profile of a learner's strengths and weaknesses is kept and updated, learners can move from one program to another without having to undergo placement testing again. Quigley (1992) points out that the assessment process often discourages learners in pointing out what they cannot do and reminds them of unhappy school experiences. Computer record-keeping eliminates the need for reappraisal since learners can take their records with them into a new program. Further diagnosis can be accomplished informally (Lytle & Wolfe, 1989) and through portfolio assessment (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991).

Portfolio analysis is becoming popular in adult literacy as a more authentic assessment of a learner's abilities (Fingeret, 1993). Computer technology could resolve one of the biggest problems with this approach, namely the issue of who owns the portfolio when a learner leaves a program. Adult learners often want to keep the portfolio of their best work. However, tutors and teachers may need it to communicate the learner's capabilities as the adult moves from one program to another. Furthermore, as portfolio assessment replaces more formal forms of testing, the portfolio is the evidence of the learner's accomplishments which can be used in program evaluation.

The portfolios of papers are cumbersome in cramped instructional quarters, however, and sometimes papers slip out and are lost. If a learner prepares his/her writing samples on a computer, these can be stored on an individual computer data disk in addition to paper in a folder. Other materials can be scanned into the computer and also stored on disk. The portfolio on a student data disk is a way for the learner's accomplishments to be transmitted from one program to another, easing the transition for both programs.

As norm-referenced testing gives way to more authentic assessments, criterion-referenced assessment is becoming recognized as an important source of information (Askov, 1993). Instead of comparing a learner to others through a grade level score, the learner is assessed in terms of his mastery of skills. Criterion-referenced assessment makes more sense in providing not only diagnostic information about individuals but also data for program accountability. Criterion- referenced assessments and the accompanying record-keeping system are easily handled by computers, again being kept on an individual student's data disk.

The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy has been developing computer-based,

criterion-referenced assessments of basic skills in five job clusters. Two modes of assessment are possible: *Learning* where the learner is dynamically allowed to change his/her answers based on learning during the assessment and *Test* where the assessment is used for program evaluation or pre/post measurement. Used in *Learning* mode, where the student has the opportunity to change his/her answers based on learning from the items, assessments can also instruct learners. Either mode — *Learning* or *Test* — can be selected by the instructor for individual adult learners. The computer records learner responses to criterion-referenced assessment items in easily accessible reports which can accompany adult learners they make transitions from one program to another. It also keeps a record of all typed responses, including free response items and learner's writing in the "pull down" word processor.

Types of Technologies

Other recent reports (Mansoor, 1993; Schwartz, 1992; Turner, 1993; U.S. Congress, 1993) discuss characteristics of the various technologies and the promises they hold for literacy instruction. Rather than repeat the descriptions of the various technologies, this report concludes that the use of the technologies is more crucial to the transition issue than the type of technology. For example, while video is generally recommended for ESL and beginning readers (Mansoor, 1993), it does not offer effective instruction unless it is used interactively; the technology, in and of itself, is not as important as the ways in which it is used.

Types of Learning Environments

The environment in which technology is used affects the ease of transition from a volunteer tutoring to adult basic education program. Perhaps more important than the physical setting is the staff's attitude toward learners' use of technology. The willingness to be flexible in designing instruction is crucial. Putting everyone through the same technologically delivered instruction is not a solution to the transitions dilemma. Two settings are considered below.

Technology Lab. A drop-in learning lab setting may be the most conducive to transitions. Beginning readers are tutored in the lab setting; the tutor offers a combination of print- and technology-based instruction. As learners progress, they gradually take more responsibility for their learning. They keep track of their own progress, and they learn how to operate the instructional programs that they are using. The transition from the volunteer tutoring to adult basic education is not abrupt as learners move from a tutoring relationship supplemented by technology to instruction which is primarily delivered by technology monitored and assisted by a paid instructor.

A good example of this model is the Technology for Literacy Center; although part of the St. Paul (MN) School District, it is located in a shopping mall (Turner, 1993). This setting has the additional advantage of maximum flexibility of scheduling for learners; many types of technologies are available to the learners.

Another example is the Center for Literacy, the largest community-based literacy organization in Pennsylvania and located in Philadelphia. The Center has a computer lab in a centrally located school. Learners from any program, including tutorials and classes, can drop into the lab and work on the various software programs. Tutors can also come with their students to the lab for supplemental work. The lab is staffed by former students who know the software programs from personal experience.

On a smaller scale, the Women's Program at the Lutheran Settlement House in Philadelphia has a computer lab in one of their classrooms. The lab is staffed by a VISTA volunteer who works with classes of learners. The difficulty of this model, as in the case of the other Philadelphia program, is that close coordination is required between the instructor or tutor and the lab instructor who should know what the learners need. Most of the instructors are part-time employees who do not have the opportunity to use the

software so that they know what the various programs teach. The VISTA volunteer, however, has been able to communicate with the instructors to overcome some of these problems. The adult learners assume responsibility for their own record-keeping and progress which encourages independence and empowerment of the learners.

Small Groups. Although the usual model for computer use is one learner per computer, two or three learners can use a single computer which offers an obvious economy since more learners can be served at one time. The real advantage, however, is that weaker learners can be helped by more advanced learners. Peer instruction is effective not only for the less advanced learner but also for the one who is assisting. For learners who are making the transition from volunteer tutoring to classes, peer tutoring, using computer software to deliver the lessons, is an ideal supplement to group instruction. The small groups can also work off-line in teacher-delivered instruction and group practice activities. The Tri-County OIC in Harrisburg uses this model in delivering instruction both at its instructional site and in the workplaces it serves.

Additional Considerations

Technology offers some special opportunities in the transition from volunteer tutoring to adult basic education classes as described below.

ESL Learners. While the recent Southport Institute report by Mansoor (1993) recommends technology for ESL learners, some learners reject technology in instruction because it does not fit the traditional model of instruction. In the minds of those learners the teacher is the authority; their role is to sit quietly and listen. Technology is considered frivolous, more appropriate as a game than a learning tool.

Good language learning, however, is interactive; students must use their English language skills. Technology can be used to break out of the traditional mold of instruction. Videos can present common situations which require certain language responses. After watching the videos, learners can role play the situations, such as calling a supervisor to report the need for a sick day.

The interactive videodisk created in South Australia entitled *The Aussie Barbie* (Anderson, 1991) uses the context of an Australian barbecue to demonstrate the appropriate language for a social event. Learners select appropriate responses to situations from various choices shown on the videodisk; branching occurs depending on their responses. Other programs model correct language patterns. The learner is asked to imitate the phrase which is recorded for both learner and instructor evaluation.

Instead of technology being a cultural barrier, it can help non-native speakers move from volunteer tutoring to group classes. It can be used to mix language groups so that English must be spoken in order to communicate about the lesson presented by technology. As a strategy to aid in transition, technology can bring these mixed language groups together to present good literacy instruction in the functional context of daily life tasks. The group use of the technology provides the support needed for those who are moving from tutoring to group ESL classes. The author of this paper used this model in developing and field testing software in Australia with non-native speakers (Askov & Cole, 1985).

Mansoor's excellent report (1993) on technology in ESL programs summarizes the research as well as provides insights into policy and practice. While it does not deal with the transition issue directly, it does provide an extremely useful look at technology for this subpopulation of adult learners.

Special Needs Learners. Adults with learning difficulties may especially benefit from technology. The self-paced nature of CAI can reinforce concepts and skills with infinite patience. These learners need multiple presentations of literacy skills in order to learn them. They also need to be taught how to transfer literacy skills learned in one or media to new situations. Various technologies combined with print reinforcement provide

multiple opportunities in learning literacy skills. Tutors and teachers alike can capitalize on the strengths of technology for these learners, easing the transition from one type of program to another.

Integrated Learning Systems (ILS). The capability of an ILS to offer instruction, usually by computer, for all learners regardless of level is appealing. While big systems offer opportunities for learners at all levels, and ease transition from volunteer tutoring to adult basic education classes, they do not use a functional context approach to instruction. It is very difficult to customize these learning systems to a unique group of learners. However, they may be used as a basis for literacy skill development with supplementary instruction focusing on the needs of local learners.

It is possible to create ILS-like packages of software, using commercial record-keeping software. As long as an assessment and record-keeping system is in place, various types of technologies can be included in the simulated ILS.

Both Mansoor (1993) and Turner (1993) offer excellent discussions of the commercial ILS. Their major drawbacks are their expense, generic instruction, and lack of customization. Their major appeal is their ease of use, not requiring a highly trained staff, although research has shown that a more highly trained staff got better results with an ILS (Nurss, 1989).

A Final Note

If technology is to be exploited for its many capabilities in helping adults make transitions from one program to another, funding from the federal and state governments needs to be addressed at the policy level. Volunteer literacy programs do not have the resources for technology purchases in spite of the fact that instruction, assessment, and record-keeping could be much more effective and efficient with technology. Along with funding for technology must come staff development to upgrade the capabilities of personnel in all types of programs to capitalize on the power that technology has to offer.

In summary, technology can contribute to successful program transitions by:

- building learners' self-esteem and empowerment so that students take control of their own learning;
- forming a bridge from one program type to another;
- providing record-keeping to shorten the reassessment process;
- encouraging communication between the volunteer tutor and adult basic education teacher;
- offering opportunities for peer tutoring and small group work using technology.

Addendum

The use of technology promises adult education programs opportunities for enhanced instruction and staff development, more efficient and effective record-keeping procedures, and simplified transitioning of adult learners from one program to another. Unfortunately, many literacy and adult basic education programs simply do not have access to the technology or do not use it effectively. This situation is reflected in the results of a recent survey of adult literacy services in Pennsylvania. Results from the study (Forlizzi & Askov, 1994) indicate that only approximately 50% of Pennsylvania's adult literacy providers use technology for instruction; less than 25% use modems. Some programs have video cassette recorders (VCRs) and computers, but they do not use them on a regular basis. In fact, programs report that the most commonly used form of technology is paper and pencil. These results reinforce two issues discussed in the paper: access to the technology and the need for staff training. These issues must be addressed if programs are to use technology to facilitate learners' making the transition from one education program to another. Assuming the technology is available and that staff are trained to use it, literacy and adult basic education programs also must collaborate, offering opportunities for their staff and adult learners to use technology to facilitate effective transitions.

Access

As mentioned in this paper, costs are a major barrier to purchasing technology. Literacy programs have overcome some of the cost barriers, however, by soliciting support from local sources. For example, many literacy programs report success in obtaining hardware and software from local businesses upgrading their equipment, private foundation grants, or service organization contributions. Also, programs have discovered that some adaptive devises, such as Franklin Learning Resources' *Speaking Ace*, can be purchased for individual learners through Vocational Rehabilitation services. Several Federal adult education funding sources, such as the U. S. Department's Library Services and Construction Act, Title VI (Library Literacy Program) and National Workplace Literacy Program, also allow limited equipment and software purchases. Also at the Federal level, the recent Goals 2000 legislation (Public Law 103-227) creates the Office of Educational Technology in the U. S. Department of Education. This Office, now addressed in a section of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, includes adult learners—at least marginally—in the legislation's language. This office, however, focuses on K-12 education; as a result, no guarantee exists that adult learners will have equal access to the technology available in elementary and secondary schools. From previous experience, adult education programs have found that access through schools varies widely from state to state. To remedy the issue of access, several legislators recently suggested that technology be introduced as part of the reauthorization of the Adult Education Act. While some progress in improving access to technology for adult learners is being made, much work is left to be done.

Training

Staff training and support were addressed in the paper; however, panel members and participants at the Conference on Transitions suggested additional strategies for improving current practices. For example, Carlin suggested that adult educators use electronic communications such as the Internet and America Online to access technology expertise. Both networks provide online access to adult educators with extensive experience in using instructional technology with adult learners. Literacy Volunteers of New York, for example, is exploring the possibility of providing software reviews online, a strategy that would allow continuous reviews of newly available software and updates of software reviews based on instructors' and learners' feedback. [Network users can comment on the reviews, adding their own experiences and concerns.) Two specific barriers exist to more extensive use of this technology: programs often lack the necessary equipment (for example, a modem); others lack expertise in using the systems (America Online is user-friendly while the Internet is less so). In addition, the various networks are linked (e.g., one can obtain information from the Internet through America Online); however, they are not coordinated. A participant suggested that better coordination would greatly facilitate communication among network users.

Another suggestion for staff training was the use of regular meetings of literacy and adult basic education instructors and learners to discuss the use of technology and the effectiveness of available instructional software. These meetings would serve two purposes: provide an opportunity for networking and communication across programs, and create a collaborative format for regularly reviewing and evaluating software. Finally, several participants suggested the use of distance learning (teleconferences and interactive videoconferences) as a strategy for improving staff training, particularly in rural states and territories.

Additional notes and comments

In the paper, the authors state that software designed for children is generally inappropriate for adults. During the panel discussion at the Conference on Transitions, Bieschke-Baker reported that she usually removes childish graphics (such as animals)

from software before giving it to an adult learner. She has found, however, that many adult learners understand that the software was originally designed for children and are not offended by it. These learners believe that the program is helping them—"it works for them"—and is, therefore, appropriate and acceptable. Instructors and tutors are encouraged to include learners in decisions regarding software. Learners, as they use various software packages, can assist instructors by evaluating the software for effectiveness and appropriateness. Educators can encourage adult learners to take a more active role in their education by including them in the decision-making process.

Bieschke-Baker also noted that old equipment and software are useful—learners can still benefit from using old programs that focus on simple games or drill and practice exercises as part of a comprehensive instructional program. She also encouraged the use of adaptive devices to support the use of software programs. Inexpensive technological tools can help adults become independent learners. These tools can help adults who are having difficulty decoding unfamiliar words, allowing them to help themselves rather than depending on a tutor or teacher for assistance. Using the *Speaking Ace*, for example, a learner can type the unfamiliar word and request to have it pronounced.

The use of technology as an instructional tool for adult learners is growing. Access and staff training barriers must be reduced, however, if this tool is to effectively facilitate learners' educational development and successful transition from literacy to adult basic education programs.

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Setting Up Transitional Programs Through Effective Collaboration:

A Practitioner's Point of View

Carol Clymer-Spradling
Director, Literacy & Workforce Development Programs
El Paso Community College
El Paso, Texas

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Carol Clymer-Spradling
Director, Literacy & Workforce
Development Programs
El Paso Community College

Introduction

Most practitioners agree that it is important to enable students who complete a literacy program to prepare for their next educational steps. The national quality indicators for adult education established by the U.S. Department of Education include an indicator that is related to transition, "learners advance in the instructional programs that allow them to continue their education or training," (USDOE; p. 5). When one looks for model programs which handle transition effectively or general guidelines for setting up transitional components, however, the information is scarce. Many programs offer helpful referral services, but such services are not always enough to help learners succeed in their next educational steps.

Many literacy programs may be familiar with transitional issues because they often work collaboratively as they deliver services. Typically, staff are experienced at piecing together services from different providers in order to meet the needs of participants. This "quilting" of services requires effective collaborations and is at the heart of providing effective transition for learners.

Unfortunately, however, most literacy programs are understaffed, and other programmatic concerns such as funding and recruitment become priorities for survival. Fundamental aspects of transition, such as knowing about the services of other programs for referral purposes, are routine, but substantive transitional services and instructional components do not seem to be in place for many programs. Learners get lost in the "black hole" of literacy programs. Access to more advanced educational or vocational programs is a frequent problem for learners, especially those who are limited in their English proficiency (Wiley, 1993; Wrigley, 1993).

This "black hole" of literacy programs is a phenomena that occurs when learners: 1) enter a literacy program, do not have very clear goals about what they want to achieve, receive little or no help in establishing what they want to achieve and inadequate preparation for transition to other more advanced programs; or 2) know what they want to accomplish in the literacy program, accomplish it, advance to another program and do not succeed because they do not understand or cannot meet the requirements without some assistance. They drop out of the program and back into the "black hole" even though they had experienced educational success before. Some typical examples that reflect the "black hole" are described below.

Example 1: the learner asks to repeat the program or a level of the program over and over no matter how much they have accomplished. The learner makes comments such as "I'm not ready to go to another program," or "I need to take this program over again because I'm not ready to move up or out yet," or "I still don't know any English."

Example 2: the learner attends various literacy or ESL programs in a community and accomplishes what the programs have to offer. The learner has a tendency, however, to repeat the same instructional areas over and over because s/he is fearful and lacks the confidence to enroll in more advanced programs. The learner faithfully travels from literacy program to literacy program without making too much forward progress.

Example 3: the learner completes a program, improves skills significantly and feels confident about it. The learner does not, however, continue in any program, but goes back home and does not pursue other educational goals. There has not been any guidance or encouragement for the next steps the learner might take or consider taking. The program staff and learners cheered the accomplishment of the first goal, but there were no mechanisms for deciding on future goals or next steps.

Example 4: the learner completes one program and makes it to another program, but drops out because neither the sender nor the receiver helps the learner develop the transitional skills or behaviors needed for success in the next steps. The learner does not feel confident in the next program, does not know how the system of the next program works, and does not ask for help. There is inadequate support for helping the learner to develop the skills or confidence for the next program. The learner drops out feeling once again like a failure and is inclined to avoid education in the future. The result is a misfiring transition that could cause damage to the learner.

Of course, literacy programs are not the only educational organizations that need to attend to transitional issues of learners. Public schools, community colleges, technical schools and universities, for example, also have a significant interest in effective transition. Initiatives such as tech prep, school to work transition, articulation programs, ESL transitional programs, and Trio programs are some examples of attempts to address transitional issues of learners. Nevertheless, the examples of effective transitional programs are limited. Therefore, it is vital to build upon what is known, develop models that are specific to adult literacy programs and test their viability.

The purpose of this paper is to develop a framework for building effective transitional programs through effective collaboration strategies and to illustrate how some programs are building effective transitional components. Specific issues of English as a Second Language (ESL) transition are addressed as well.

The Primary Transitional Players

Volunteer programs often come from grassroots efforts in response to specific needs of a community. For example, a neighborhood realizes that there are others in the community that do not know how to read, so they volunteer to help others at a local center. Other volunteer programs are set up by community organizations who have a vested interest in community members learning how to read such as libraries, churches and newspaper publishing companies.

One to one tutoring or small group instruction are common instructional delivery systems used in volunteer programs. The two major volunteer literacy organizations, Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) and Laubach Literacy International, differ somewhat in their fundamental instructional philosophy. LVA uses a whole language approach, while Laubach Literacy employs a skill based, more structured approach to developing literacy. Both programs have learner-centered philosophies and try to focus on what the learner wants to learn how to read.

Because of the diversity of purpose and shortages of staff, volunteer programs frequently have limited capacity to develop extensive transitional systems that go beyond meeting the initial goals of learners. Furthermore, many volunteer programs do not see it as their role to expand the learner' s perception of his or her educational needs. They are designed to identify the learner' s goal or goals relative to reading. When goals are accomplished, they may refer learners who want to go on to other educational programs and follow-up to see that they got there, but not much more.

Adult basic education programs often exist to help learners complete or do something they did not do as a children or adolescents. Or, in the case of immigrant adults, learn the English and acculturation skills that are needed for survival in the United States. Adult basic education programs have three general program purposes: 1) enabling students to get GED's, 2) building basic skills or 3) helping students to learn English as a second language. Building basic skills is a necessary component in realizing these purposes, as is learning English, but basic skills development and English language acquisition are often viewed as steps toward getting the GED for adult learners or other goals such as job training or college enrollment.

Program structures vary significantly in ABE programs, but typical instruction includes skill based classes, individual assistance with either self-paced materials and/or computer assisted instruction. Difficulty in establishing transitional relationships with ABE programs can result from the funding base which tends to promote head counting rather than progress toward learner' s goals. Many ABE programs are in a good position to receive learners from volunteer programs, but do not establish strong instructional components to determine the reasons why learners want to learn English or get their GED. Further, they typically do not develop strong transitional links with more advanced educational programs for learners' next educational steps.

Community colleges are funded to enable learners to obtain two year degrees, to get short term job training, or to prepare for transfer to four year schools. Many community colleges are involved in a myriad of programs designed to serve their communities that go beyond these three purposes, but few are in business without these three objectives. Basic skills development and English language acquisition are offered in community colleges because they are necessary, but few community colleges view remediation, ESL or literacy training as their *raison d' etre*. Funding for literacy or remedial programs varies greatly across institutions. Tuition reimbursements, external funding such as Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Carl Perkins, ABE and other state funds are commonly used.

Community colleges, however, play, a larger role in the transitional discussion, and that is their involvement in job training and vocational programs. Often the community college plays a part in the next educational steps for learners. Increasingly community colleges are involved in developing integrated vocational programs designed to help learners with low basic skills or little English, learn a trade simultaneously while building reading, writing, or language skills. In addition, community colleges offer counseling and support programs to help students enroll and graduate.

Because community colleges are focused on the outcomes of degrees, certificates, jobs or successful transfer to other postsecondary institutions, they can be weak in successfully helping literacy students make transitions to college. Community colleges have been criticized for cumbersome entry requirements, inappropriate placement criteria, and bureaucratic enrollment procedures. Collectively, these characteristics make transition difficult for high risk learners who come from external literacy, ESL and ABE programs.

Job Program Training Act programs supported by the Department of Labor often function through local Private Industry Councils. While job training is the primary

purpose of JTPA programs, literacy, basic skills, and English required for job training are important and viewed as vehicles for getting jobs. Funding that comes through JTPA is largely based on the number of job placements or GED's attained. Because of stringent performance criteria, JTPA funded programs may be reluctant to provide transitional services before students complete their educational plans even if other programs are more appropriate.

JTPA programs are designed to enable economically disadvantaged individuals to receive job training, but they are often not the service providers themselves. The local Private Industry Council, which usually administers JTPA funds, contracts with other service providers, like ABE programs, community colleges or proprietary schools for instruction. Consequently, they have strict requirements to ensure that recipients are economically disadvantaged. These requirements necessitate extensive and cumbersome documentation which can make enrollment difficult. JTPA programs are required to provide case management and individualized educational planning which can help with transition for learners, however.

The over-regulated eligibility requirements, confusion about who is the service provider and a case management system that is not user friendly, create barriers to transition for learners who need JTPA funds to meet their educational and vocational goals. In addition, JTPA programs have assessment requirements that are designed to demonstrate accomplishment of performance outcomes that are often incompatible with goal-based programs or learner-centered programs causing transitional barriers for the learner.

Because of the extensive social problems of their clients, human services agencies are also key players in the literacy movement. These agencies are involved because participants of their programs must be involved in education and job training programs by legislated mandates. While their primary purpose is to meet regulations, they value the role of education in helping clients to change lives and thereby reduce dependency. Education, however, is not the bottom line of their existence.

The JOBS program, which is required for certain clients who receive AFDC support, is an educational/job training program designed to enable welfare recipients to develop self-sufficiency. JOBS receives little funding to support the education and job training required by law, but welfare agencies must work with local service providers such as ABE programs, JTPA programs, and community colleges to deliver these components of the program.

The nature of the JOBS program necessitates that solid transitional components be in place. Welfare recipients can have detailed plans for education that support job training and lead to employment needed to get off of welfare. Important transitional links between service providers must be initiated for many clients to progress from adult education programs to job training programs to work. Because JOBS participants have time requirements to complete job training and become employed, effective transition is vital.

A transitional strategy is inherent in the case management system that is a part of the JOBS program, but the case management system has limitations regarding transition. The limitations stem from the structure of the JOBS program itself and its reliance on service providers that have goals and delivery systems that may not be compatible with the goals of the JOBS program. For example, JOBS participants must enroll in education or job training for 20 hours a week, but many literacy providers have difficulty providing intensive services because of inadequate funding. This requirement restricts the providers that can serve students, and learners and case managers have few program choices which can greatly affect client participation. Also a two year limitation on completing the JOBS program is not realistic for clients who have many educational and personal barriers. For language minorities in the JOBS program, two years is not sufficient for learning the language, developing realistic job skills, and landing a job that is significantly above minimum wage. Adult education programs

that are learner centered may have trouble adapting to the welfare system' s top down approach to self-sufficiency, i.e. "we know what it will take for you to get off of welfare."

Business and industry plays a significant role in literacy development as companies try to upgrade the skills of workers. Although literacy training, basic skills and ESL are clearly not the primary purpose of business and industry, many see basic education as vital to their future. Funding for literacy, basic skills and ESL training is provided through the United States Department of Education (USDOE) National Workplace Literacy program, through some Department of Labor programs, through various state funded projects and through a company's own resources. Funding through the USDOE requires literacy, basic skills or ESL training to be job specific, incentives to encourage workers to attend, and assurances that the workers in most need are served first. Whether outside funding is used or whether the company employs its own resources, basic skills, GED, and ESL instruction is usually delivered by an educational institution which has a contractual agreement with the employer.

A current dilemma in workplace programs is related to research that indicates that effective instruction should be related specifically to jobs. On the other hand, many employers want their workers to learn the basics so that they can be prepared for future jobs and the changing workplace. Regardless of the approach, however, most employers want a functionally based program that has wide applications for job training and productivity. Consequently, business and industry are struggling with viable program outcomes for literacy, basic skills and ESL programs.

Transitional issues for business and industry relate to not knowing exactly what the future holds. Companies struggle with the questions of what are they preparing the workers for — future changes, future layoffs, or future promotions. In business and industry, profit is the bottom line, but it is sometimes difficult to predict how investment in workers now will lead to profit for the future. Therefore, it is difficult to plan the transitional programs that are needed for workers.

Transitional Models

Vocational Programs

Several efforts have been made in the field of vocational education to improve transition from school to work and secondary vocational programs to postsecondary programs. Designed to help learners connect work and learning, school to work transition programs include strategies which help them make connections between educational experiences and requirements of careers.

School to work transition programs have been successful in establishing a cadre of experiences for learners that enhance their knowledge of the workplace, provide direct experience in the trades that learners are preparing for, and enhance their career advancement skills. Experiential and work site learning are fundamental ingredients in successful school to work transition programs. Career guidance, a variety of instructional settings that accommodate different learning styles, and follow-up services are also basic elements of effective school to work transition programs.

Articulation is a major part of school-to-work programs and requires that educators at all levels communicate with one another as well as with business and industry to decide: 1) the content of curriculum, 2) to ensure that curriculum is linked appropriately, and 3) to focus on the requirements of real jobs. An important element of articulation is the development of functional context curriculum, or curriculum that is designed specifically to address job tasks.

A handout from the U.S.Department of Education outlines the following principles that are necessary for effective school-to-work programs suggests. It suggests that such programs should:

1. Motivate youth to stay in school, graduate and become productive citizens;

2. Enable students to achieve high academic levels;

3. Link classroom curriculum to worksite experience to help students understand the importance of learning skills needed in the workplace; and

4. Lead to initial employment, continued employment, and lifelong learning. (p.2)

The most common examples of school to work programs are: 1) cooperative education, 2) school-based enterprise schools, 3) apprenticeship programs, 4) Tech Prep programs and 5) vocational academies. Cooperative education programs enable learners to work and attend school simultaneously, working in programs that are linked to what they are studying. Enterprise schools usually involve some type of real business for which the learners are responsible. For example, construction students are involved in building real houses that are sold for a profit, or building maintenance students operate their own building repair service. Apprenticeship programs require that learners work together with actual workers on the job while learning how to do the job. Tech Prep programs facilitate cooperative arrangements between secondary and postsecondary institutions to provide articulated career pathways leading to employment. Vocational academies expose learners to a variety of career options and the actual work that is required for these options.

Trio Programs

About thirty years ago, the U.S. Department of Education began funding Trio or bridge programs. These programs are designed to enable high risk high school students to enroll in colleges and universities successfully and be retained so that they will graduate. Established to address the problem of inadequate role models for success, the Trio programs serve mostly first generation college students who come from low income families and who are academically underprepared or handicapped. The first three Trio programs were: 1) Talent Search, 2) Upward Bound and 3) Student Support Services.

Talent Search is directed towards implementing specific recruitment strategies for junior and senior high school students who have the tendency to resist or avoid higher education and who need extensive assistance in completing the requirements for enrollment into college programs. Designed to help high school students in the target population to prepare for college, Upward Bound programs offer "hands on" activities at two year or four year institutions.

Typically, Upward Bound programs bring students to a campus during the summer or on week ends to provide intensive academic and personal support. Participants usually are enrolled in one college course, supportive basic or study skills programs, and tutorial programs to ensure that they will succeed in college. In addition, Upward Bound students are also provided with cultural experiences to enhance their preparation for college life.

The Student Support Services program is designed to increase the retention rates of first generation, low income or handicapped students. Student Support Services programs often enroll participants in customized programs that will enable them to graduate. Peer counseling, special workshops and assistance, supplemental instruction, tutoring and cultural activities are typical components of these programs.

Three other programs were added to the original Trio offerings. Educational Opportunities Centers (EOC) provide extensive assistance to help low income students, especially those who are displaced or under-employed, to enroll in postsecondary education and obtain financial aid. A special technical assistance program for providers and a program to encourage undergraduate college students who are low income and minorities to become PhD students are also included in the TRIO programs.

Adult Education Programs

In 1993, the U.S. Department of Education funded three demonstration projects to establish models for transitional programs for limited English proficient (LEP) students. The ESL transitional projects are designed to

enable learners who attend adult education or other community education programs to experience a successful transition to college. While the final reports on these demonstration projects are not yet available, (the projects end in 1995), preliminary findings indicate that successful transitional programs for LEP students have the following components:

1. Key contacts (who are fully aware of the transitional needs of participants and who are equally committed to addressing the needs through programmatic functions) are located at both the sending and receiving sites.

2. A thorough understanding of the sending and receiving regulations and procedures and a commitment to work on regulations exists. And, procedures that create barriers to successful transition such as prohibitive entrance requirements is apparent.

3. Instructional links that connect what the learner completed in one program with the requirements of the next program are in place.

4. Personalized assistance for the learner that begins with recruitment from the receiving institutions and covers such areas as knowledge about the program, completing eligibility or entrance requirements, making decisions about academic and career choices, "hands on" exposure to college requirements and instructional delivery systems, specialized language and basic skills development, supplemental instruction, tutorial assistance for academic coursework, peer counseling, and familiarity with tests is available.

5. A support group or support activities that let learners know that they are not alone and that help them build confidence necessary for success is provided.

6. Advocacy to change procedures or requirements that perpetuate barriers for success, such as making enrollment decisions on the basis of inadequate ESL placement exams, is part of the program.

7. Continual evaluation of the transitional efforts, activities and results from both the sending and receiving institutions to work out bugs and to make transition as smooth as possible for learners takes place.

8. The commitment of all partners to make the interests and needs of the learners a priority above territoriality issues of programs is solid.

One of the directors of these transitional programs, Inaam Mansoor, presented a simple process for building transitional partnerships in ESL at a recent meeting of Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages. She has also adapted this information to a workplace context. Mansoor suggests:

1. Identify common needs and interests of partners in order to establish a vision of what is required to develop effective transition programs.

2. Establish the responsibilities for carrying out that vision ensuring that there is shared commitment and effort from all partners.

3. Collaboratively plan what action will be taken, what resources will be needed to establish the transitional programs, and how implementation will be evaluated.

4. Clearly designate who will take responsibility for the leadership of the transitional partnership.

A recent national study on adult ESL by the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis reveals that a strong curriculum, an effective liaison person who works with both the sending and receiving programs, and strong support and commitment from high level administrators are key elements for effective transition (Wrigley 1993, p. 10). Wrigley suggests the following strategies for promoting transition for language minority students:

1. Create an atmosphere of high expectations and accompanying instructional and support activities to enable learners to seek and attain higher vocational, academic or professional goals.

2. Fund collaborations across service providers so that a continuum of educational programs can be established which deals with transitional issues and evaluates transitional components.

3. Develop transitional structures for late entry youth, teenage immigrants who come to this country, so that they catch up on academic curriculum they have missed.

4. Make transition a quality standard and requirement for ABE programs and show how to develop models to accomplish effective access, retention and transition.

In a study on improving coordination in adult education programs for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Policy and Planning, Alamprese, Brigham, and Sivilli (1992), suggest four key strategies for facilitating organizational cooperation:

1. Determine the cost benefits of exchanging resources, information or services.

2. Once it has been decided that it is beneficial for organizations to work with one another, determine the boundaries of the relationship.

3. Develop a system of ongoing communication by establishing a task force, advisory committee or consortium that has a common vision.

4. Expand the number of organizational participants in the relationship to increase resources and help keep activities visible.

Community Based Programs

Habana-Hafner, Reed and Associates (1989) suggest three critical stages of partnership building that have strong implications for developing effective transitional programs through collaboration. Each stage is outlined below.

Stage 1 - Negotiation and Problem Clarification

- identifying problems and problem solving strategies
- identifying and locating resources for resolution
- understanding power implications
- identifying steps for getting started
- developing interagency understanding
- resolving interagency conflicts

Stage 2 - Direction-setting, Trust building, Empowerment

- outlining plans
- establishing leadership and responsibility
- identifying decision making process
- understanding the locus of control
- attending to group dynamics
- formulating agreements

Stage 3 - Developing Structure for Operation

- planning for specific task accomplishment
- identifying and appointing staff
- locating and utilizing resources
- establishing a communication network
- keeping records and documenting operations
- evaluating decisions and making revisions in the plan

A Framework for Effective Transitions

Building on existing knowledge about collaboration and coordination and specific experiences in setting up transitional programs, a framework for developing transitional programs for adult literacy programs is outlined below.

Identify Key Players for Collaboration

The job of helping adults become more literate is currently accomplished by many different organizations and individuals. Prior to a media blitz that brought tremendous national attention to an "illiteracy crisis", mostly community based programs and adult basic education programs worked with adults who did not know how to read and write enough to fill out a job application. Today, many organizations deal with some kind of adult education. Government agencies such as labor, housing, corrections, commerce, health and human services, are mandated by law to address literacy requirements and realize that literacy is needed to confront other societal problems. Education institutions are embracing literacy development in their missions as well, and it is included in the national education goals. Community organizations such as libraries, churches, and neighborhood centers continue to be involved in literacy as they respond to the needs of their neighborhoods. Business and industry are incorporating literacy instruction into their training programs as they prepare for radical changes in the workplace due to

technological advancements and alternative management systems.

While it is difficult to keep track of all of the players involved in adult literacy and work with them to establish effective transitional programs, it is necessary to identify which educational partners in a community might or could have a transitional relationship with the learners a program serves. Thus, identifying a program' s primary receiving and sending partners according to the needs and goals of the learners is essential.

These partners will be the key players that must be part of the transitional system for learners. A good way to identify the key players for sending organizations is to be aware of learners' goals and which players can and will help to meet those goals. If learners want to go on for short term job training for example, then it is important for programs to link with other providers who will help learners to get short term job training.

For receiving organizations, an easy way to identify key players is to find out from which organizations learners have been referred. Then it is important to work with those organizations to make sure transition is smooth and the learner can adjust to the receiving program.

Many communities identify key players as they establish coalitions which meet regularly to exchange ideas and information and to pool resources. A coalition can serve as the organization that links programs for learners. Coalitions should include the identification and elimination of transitional barriers for learners on their agendas. Members of the coalition should plan transitional systems that enable learners to move from program to program within the coalition and the coalition should have a clearly defined structure for the leadership needed to keep transitional elements running smoothly.

Focus on the Goals of the Learner

Central to effective transitions is having specific knowledge of the learner' s goals. Typically, this is done by asking learners what their goals are. In many cases, however, learners have not done a great deal of thinking about their goals, not because they are incapable, but because they often are in the "one step at a time" mode. Their energy is usually devoted to the first step of getting in the door of a literacy or adult education program so that they can learn to read, learn English, or get their GED. In some cases, little thought is given to why. Learners who have not developed functional literacy skills typically have not developed sophisticated goal setting or decision making strategies. Those who come to an ESL program identify learning English as their goal and may not have developed related subgoals.

Goal setting needs to become a part of the literacy or ESL programs' curriculum. This is not to say that programs do not try to find out about learners' goals, needs and interests. In fact, most programs do ask about learners' goals at the beginning of a program during intake and initial screening activities. Notwithstanding, some programs lose focus of the learner' s real goals as the learner continues in a program. The program' s goals or the funder' s goals have a tendency to become the priority.

Other programs which do a very good job of centering instruction on the learner' s initial goals, such as the goal to read forms or job applications, often do not work with the learner to help develop other educational or related vocational goals. Usually there is an indication of what the learner needs at the beginning of the program to determine if the learner is at the right place or eligible for a program, but many programs do not update this information routinely during the program.

If this information is collected, most programs are not in a position to address the goals of learners comprehensively. As learners determine their educational and vocational goals and develop plans for pursuing the goals, programs have a responsibility to establish instructional links that will enable learners to move from one educational provider to another successfully.

Develop Transitional Components from Both Sending and Receiving Institutions

It is vital to learn about the other programs in the community which provide services that will enable the learner to complete educational goals. Understandably, few programs can serve the learner comprehensively, but providers can work closely with one another to develop a continuum of services and to ensure smooth progression and successful referral for the learner. Senders and receivers can work jointly to develop transitional components which link the outcomes of one program to the entry requirements of the next program as part of the educational ladder for the learner. This means that exit points of one program need to feed into entry points of another program. It also means that substantive follow-up should occur when learners are referred to other service providers.

Developing compatible transition points and systems requires significant joint program planning and development. Learners who leave one supportive environment need to enter another supportive learning environment. Specific attention must be given to the activities that will provide appropriate support for the learner as next steps are taken.

Try to Walk in Other Partners' Shoes

Differences in programmatic regulations or philosophies must be understood in order to develop effective transitional programs. Goals, funding requirements, instructional approaches, outcomes, and backgrounds can vary greatly across programs. Since funding sources often drive a program and what learners will accomplish when they participate, completion of the program goals can become a priority over the learner' s goals or the next logical educational steps for the learner.

Usually in the context of protecting funding sources, issues of territoriality can influence the development of effective transitional programs. For example, many adult basic education programs are funded on the basis of the quantity of students that are served in their programs. Consequently some programs may be overly concerned about the number of students enrolled because funding is based on a formula that uses contact hours as a determinant of the size of allocations. Keeping students in a program to maintain contact hours is not always in the best interests of the learner. This practice can lead to resistance on the part of the program administration in developing transitional components that are expedient for the learner, but ABE administrators risk losing funding if they do not keep up contact hours.

It is also important to have a basic understanding of partners' instructional philosophies, how instruction is delivered and the outcomes that are intended in order to develop effective transitional components. Hooking together the entry requirements of one program and the outcomes of another is the most important element of transition for learners. While many literacy, basic skills and ESL programs have had difficulty in specifying outcomes, (Clymer-Spradling, 1993) effective transition that meets the needs of learners is difficult to achieve without understanding what each program is trying to accomplish.

Understand as Much as Possible about Other Programs' Regulations, Requirements and Structure and Build on the Programs' Strengths to Provide the Transitional Services

As mentioned previously, service providers differ greatly in terms of goals, delivery systems, funding sources, staffing, and philosophies in working with adults. While it is ideal to share a common vision with the key players that are involved in making transition smoother for learners, it is not always possible for programs to carry out activities in the same way. For example, it is difficult for volunteer programs to have a person devoted to transition because volunteer programs are typically understaffed. Therefore, the receiving site needs to take on more of the transitional effort. Adult basic education programs have similar problems because they are largely staffed with part-time instructors. Hence, a community college partner may be able to provide transitional classes at the ABE program through the

college's counseling staff. JTPA and JOBS programs tend to put a lot of emphasis on case management and are in a position to help learners with transitions. The strict regulations of these programs, however, can cause the case management systems to be "unfriendly" to learners. Successful learners who have advanced in the system can be recruited and trained as volunteers by the sending program to help learners meet eligibility requirements. Finally, community colleges may have admissions policies and procedures which are restrictive for literacy or ESL students. Community based programs can work with college staff as advocates for the learners and help establish special entry programs that simplify enrollment.

Develop Transitional Goals with Partners and Action Plans for Implementing Them

To develop a truly effective transitional program for learners, partners have to be committed to developing substantive systems of transition. This involves establishing specific and compatible goals of transition for all partners. For example, if a community based program, an ABE/ESL program and a community college want to work together to ensure that learners can move from program to program successfully, they must work out all of the details that will enable learners to progress efficiently. To do this, program administrators and front line staff such as instructors, volunteers, and assessment specialists, must meet to establish:

- the transitional needs of learners
- a vision of the transitional system that will help meet the needs of learners
- a description of the instructional components that need to be in place for the transition
- the goals to be achieved to realize the vision and to develop the instructional components and support services needed
- the specific tasks, resources and personnel that must be accomplished to put the plan of action

At meetings, staff from each of the partnering agencies have to feel free to discuss concerns of territoriality and turf. Such issues must be worked out and discussed with sensitivity and understanding. Partners must be equally committed to making a transitional program work and must put forth equal effort and resources for implementing the program. There also must be contact staff from each organization who are responsible for ensuring that every organization upholds its commitments.

Enable Instructional Staff from Each Partnering Organization to Work Together to Ensure that the Instructional Components for Transition are Linked Appropriately

As stated earlier, instructional outcomes and program exits of one program must lead to instructional beginning points and entry requirements of another program. The staff who teach or who provide counseling and support services must meet together to share curriculum and instructional activities and develop complimentary instructional components that prepare learners who complete one program for the requirements of the next program. Thus, the community based volunteer needs to meet with the ABE instructor to review the content of the ABE program and the teaching methodology and to prepare the learner for another type of instructional experience. Likewise, ABE instructors must become familiar with what the learner accomplished in the volunteer program and the instructional methods that were used.

Include a Staff Training Program to Ensure that all Involved Know How the System Works and What Their Roles are in Implementing the System

All staff who interact with the transition of the learner need to have training on the transitional system. Job descriptions should define areas of responsibility for implementing the system. Ideally, staff from each of the partners should have a joint training session where they can learn about the roles of other staff members. Written handbooks and procedures are needed to ensure that staff are consistent in carrying out the transitional goals and procedures.

Implement a System of Ongoing Evaluation and Follow-up

Partners must agree on how they will evaluate the system and schedule activities that will provide for ongoing assessment. Meetings, surveys, phone calls, record keeping and follow-up on the learners must be included in the evaluation process. Joint data collection forms and universal evaluation tools should be developed and used by each program. Information from the evaluations and data collection should be reviewed routinely by each partner to make decisions about improving the transitional components for learners.

Transitional Strategies

Although it is difficult to find any one program that is comprehensively addressing the transitional needs of learners, there are several programs that are doing a good job with various aspects of the transitional picture. Strategies from four programs are highlighted below.

Baytown, Texas, LVA program at the Sterling Municipal Library

In a conversation with Jane Brody on April 15, 1994, the following strategies were identified:

1. Increase learners' exposure to opportunities that go beyond their initial purposes for attending the program by utilizing the resources of the library to expand knowledge about other educational and vocational opportunities.
2. Include information about referral in the training program for volunteers.
3. Identify contact people in the local ABE or community college programs who can provide personalized assistance for the learner' s next steps.
4. Take the learners on tours of the local community college so they can get first hand experience and information.
5. Use staff from the local ABE or community college program to work in the literacy program to link instruction and facilitate the learners' comfort level with the next program.
6. Meet routinely in a coalition or collaborative to keep informed about each provider' s services and help maintain a smooth referral system.

Literacy Volunteers of New York

In conversations with Bobye List of LVNY, April 11, 1994 and Diana Woolis of the Human Resource Administration of New York New York, April 15, the following strategies were discussed:

1. Identify a staff person that specifically works on referral and ensures that learners know how to complete entry requirements for the next program, know about transitional benefits and feel comfortable at the program.
2. Use holistic instructional approaches that prepare learners for the requirements of the next educational steps with activities that enable them to practice those steps.
3. With learners as the creators, develop a vision of what success in the next educational steps looks like and create various learning activities which enable learners to experience that vision of success.
4. Develop an organizational structure which enables the program design to change in response to learning needs required for making successful transitions to another more advanced program.

Center for Literacy, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

JoAnn Weinberger identified the following strategies in a phone interview on April 15, 1994.

1. Provide opportunities for learners to develop short and long term goals and develop plans with the learners that will help them achieve those goals along with the identification of the support services that will be required.
2. Link instruction specifically to the next educational steps with intensive instruction in literacy, life skills and career exploration.
3. Provide integrated case management, whereby a staff member at the literacy program meets regularly with a staff member

at the educational or vocational program to discuss the needs of the learner and to ensure that both the receiving and sending agencies are providing assistance for meeting learners' needs.

4. Organize meetings with the agencies that are involved with the transition of learners and closely examine what it takes to successfully make transitions from program to program. Work out the activities and services that need to be developed to facilitate transitions.

5. Develop joint workshops between partners that help learners overcome the barriers to transition.

6. When funds do not allow for "heavy duty case management," provide thorough referral services which include detailed information about other services and a person who has the responsibility to provide this information for learners.

Arlington Education and Employment Program

Inaam Mansoor has communicated these strategies at various meetings and presentations on ESL transition.

1. Create a collaborative with other partners so that a continuum of services can be developed for the client, beginning with a CBO which offers literacy services to an adult education program to enrollment in college.

2. Through the collaborative, develop a vision of how the partners will work out transitional barriers and meet learner needs.

3. Establish mechanisms for the partners to articulate curriculum content, resource utilization, and responsibility agreements.

4. Develop collaborative plans for realizing the vision and continuously evaluate the process for getting there.

5. Develop an evaluation plan that outlines the barriers to transition in order to assess the effectiveness of the program in helping learners overcome these barriers to advance through the system.

A Case Study for Developing a Transitional Process

Concerned about retention of learners within the Literacy Education Action (LEA) Program at the El Paso Community College and retention of learners who had completed the LEA program and enrolled in college courses, tutors, learning facilitators, and administrative staff began to examine problems that were causing attrition. An assessment problem was quickly identified by looking at the numbers of learners that made it through the door, but never made it to the small group or volunteer tutor that they were assigned. Staff concluded that there must be a weakness with the initial intake system and decided to examine what they were doing, why they were doing it, what about it was working, what was not working, and what effects was it having on learners.

After several focus groups with staff and learners, various concerns with both the process and assessment tools emerged. First, it was believed that the assessment tool that was being used was not appropriate. Even though the initial assessment tool was not a paper pencil test but rather a test that was completed orally, learners were still intimidated by the process. Consequently, many would complete the initial intake but never return. The solution was to develop an intake process that created a "welcoming" atmosphere, yet yielded information that would help learning facilitators make decisions regarding enrollment in LEA programs or immediate referral to more suitable programs.

As a result, instructional and administrative staff developed a three phase intake system using "authentic" or real learning situations to: 1) determine if LEA was appropriate for the learner, 2) identify learner goals, perceptions of learning, and abilities of the learner, and 3) to provide the learner with an orientation to the LEA program. The system was based on the work of Susan Lytle, Hannah Fingeret, and Raul Anorve, and used

participatory and holistic approaches to assessment.

The first phase of the "new" intake and assessment system was literally called, "welcoming." During this phase, a tutor spends some time finding out the needs of the learner in an interview. The interview helps establish language dominance, as the tutor is bilingual and can do the interview in English or Spanish. Also during this time, the tutor asks the learner to complete a short intake form, which is designed to determine if the learner knows print and can write, and in which language. If the learner is struggling with the form, the tutor picks it up and completes it while interviewing the learner. The tutor also takes anecdotal notes of the interview and finds out about when the learner can come to class. If the tutor believes that the individual can be served by LEA, a time to report to class is given to the leaner. Many times, it is very obvious that the person should be referred to another program immediately. For example, if the learner is very literate in Spanish, then s/he is referred to another EPCC ESL program or the LEA transitional program (STEP) which is discussed further below.

The participants who are enrolled in the program attend a two week class for twelve hours which enables the learner and the tutor to explore goals, interests, and abilities. Called "exploration", learners participate in goals setting exercises, determine what strengths they have that will enable them to achieve goals and what skills they will need to build. Learners also begin developing a plan that will help them to accomplish their goals. Essentially, exploration class engages learners in a discovery process about themselves and their assumptions about themselves as learners, and helps them plan for participating in the learning process.

Following exploration class, a team of instructional staff (including the exploration tutor) meet to review notes, observations, and the student's work or phase three of the enrollment process. At this meeting, a placement decision is made and the learner attends either one to one tutoring or small group instruction in Spanish literacy, bilingual literacy or English literacy.

Establishing this system is an ongoing process. A great deal of planning, trial and error, evaluating and revising activities and procedures take place as staff learn what works and what does not work. Even after four years of development, staff still change parts of the system as new learners enter the program and gaps in the program are identified.

Implementing the "exploration" system reduced attrition by at least 20%, but it begged other questions - such as are learners placed properly, are they progressing from Spanish literacy to bilingual literacy to English literacy in a reasonable amount of time. If they are progressing in LEA, are they thinking about other educational opportunities and what it will take to realize those opportunities. And, for those learners that indicated that they want to learn English or learn how to read to get a job, are they able to make informed vocational choices, plans and goals.

Staff continue to address these issues as they examine transitional concerns within the LEA program and outside of it. The question of progressing within LEA, from Spanish to bilingual to English literacy is one question that is addressed constantly. First, instructional and administrative staff have been working with an outside consultant, Heide Spruck Wrigley, to try to define each instructional area according to what learners need and want to do, what counts as success, what are the outcomes, and what are the criteria for knowing if the outcomes have been achieved. This is a painful process, but needs to be done to determine if learners progress in LEA program.

While the exercise is by no means complete, and probably never will be in a learner-centered program, staff have identified a flow of progress and are beginning to describe a student profile for each step of the journey through the LEA program. This information is being used to develop a portfolio assessment system and tools which document information about the learner' s progress. The most difficult problem has been

to reach consensus on the criteria of what counts as success. The process of establishing the criteria sometimes results in a competition between qualitative views and quantitative views of assessment. Staff are trying to help one another understand each other' s opinions but consensus has not yet been reached.

Another problem that makes this exercise very difficult stems from changes or additions in personnel. Sometimes it seems that staff make forward progress in designing the system, but as new people come to the group, the work takes another direction, not always for the best. The notion of one step forward and two steps back, is appropriate sometimes.

In helping learners make the transition from LEA to credit ESL programs at the College, staff initially developed curriculum that would help advancing students prepare for six levels of grammar based ESL instruction. Curriculum was designed for LEA learners to enter the second level as the credit ESL program offered pre-level I and level I. In reviewing the credit ESL curriculum pre-level I and level I overlapped with the LEA English literacy component. But after taking the ESL placement test, LEA students were still beginning at the pre-level. When staff questioned why LEA students had to start at pre-level ESL, they found that the placement test for credit ESL was so grammatically based, that learners who had completed the LEA holistic program did very poorly. They wrote much better than the other students, but did not do well in the placement test. In addition, some literacy students were not confident about their ability to succeed in credit ESL (many of their friends and relatives had dropped out) and the students firmly believed they needed to go back to pre-level to be successful.

In trying to address these problems, staff developed an "advancement" program. This program was designed to enable learners to deal with the credit ESL's approach, to pass an "ability to benefit" exam needed for financial aid, and to learn some study skills that would enable them to succeed in credit ESL and other future courses.

While the advancement program was an attempt to assist LEA students succeed in their next educational steps of college, it was obvious to staff that much more needed to be done for learners. Even if learners made it through 6 levels of ESL, students that completed all levels still had trouble with completing the English requirements for academic and vocational courses. An opportunity to improve and expand the advancement classes came along in 1991 when the U.S. Department of Education released a request for proposals to develop model demonstration transition programs for limited English proficient students. Fortunately, the LEA program submitted an application and was one of the recipients.

Conceived to improve transition for learners enrolling in EPCC from community based literacy programs, LEA developed a three phase program called Success through Transitional English (STEP). Partners included a Laubach Literacy Council, the public library, the local PIC, 2 adult basic education programs with the El Paso Independent School District and the Ysleta Independent School District and the Texas Department of Human Services, the El Paso Housing Authority, and the El Paso Probation Department. Three phases were not initially proposed in the project, but in responding to the needs of the sending partners, a middle phase was added. Initially it was believed that learners needed a lot of information about the college, they needed to feel comfortable and have someone they trusted to ask and answer questions, they needed some help in negotiating the EPCC system, and they needed support in language and learning when they enrolled in courses. Thus, project staff developed a 100 hour information and exposure to the college program which included enrollment in EPCC. Once participants were enrolled, they participated in activities such as tutoring, peer counseling, and support services to help them be successful in academic or vocational courses.

In early partner collaborative meetings to develop the program, staff from the various organizations were concerned about the void

time that might be created when learners finished the 100 hour course but could not take classes immediately. They were concerned that individuals would not ever take classes because they would lose interest if they had to wait for the semester to start. Therefore, another phase of the STEP program was developed to expand their preparation and give them "hands on" experience with classes. Participants visited classes to hear lectures, examined text books, reviewed syllabi or watched video tapes of various actual lectures to practice taking notes.

Other problems that arose in the STEP program related to partners not being fully committed to sending learners. Some agencies were afraid of losing students or wanted learners to complete their program goals without interest to learner' s goals. Staff worked hard to address these issues through negotiating common ground in many long and difficult meetings. All issues have not been worked out yet, because funding regulations and attitudes are sometimes hard to change, but project staff are trying to offer STEP classes simultaneously at one agency while the learners are completing the program goals.

Another problem identified by LEA staff as they worked with learners in a pre-vocational literacy program, was that literacy students did not have much experience in making career decisions regarding vocational goals. To deal with this problem, the LEAP program was created to enable learners to get actively involved in career exploration. Hands on experience and activities that help learners make decisions in real situations are core characteristics of the LEAP curriculum. Also, specific attention is given to helping learners complete entry requirements of their next educational or vocational steps.

An initial problem with implementing the LEAP program related to the degree of thinking that learners give to career options. Some learners have a fairly good idea about what they want to do vocationally, but do not know exactly how to go about getting financial aid for example. Other learners are just beginning to think that they can go beyond the literacy program and have not done much thinking about vocational options. Consequently, staff decided to develop a more accelerated version of LEAP for learners that have made decisions about their next career paths.

Even though LEA has been able to meet important transitional needs of learners through the STEP and LEAP programs, staff is also concerned about having too many separate programs which can cause confusion for learners, staff, and outside sending agencies. Currently, coordinators and instructional staff of both programs are trying to work out internal transitional issues. Staff are struggling with the differences between LEA programs, where those differences are legitimate and where they may create other barriers or simply be unnecessarily duplicative. They are also dealing with differences in internal transitional paths for learners who complete LEA programs and external transitional paths for learners who come from outside of the college. Learners who enter college through the community based programs or agencies have different needs than those who have participated in LEA. Discussions indicate that it may be necessary to combine the STEP and LEAP programs by developing an initial, quick exploration of one class period (4 hours), then provide learners options of a vocational exploration, an academic exploration, or an accelerated exploration that provides "quick and dirty" information regarding vocational and academic options.

Transitional barriers for JOBS clients and workers have been addressed differently in two other LEA programs, Project Forward and "The Cutting Edge." Project Forward is a life skills program that was developed for the state of Texas through the Texas Education Agency for JOBS clients. The project involves an extensive curriculum and lesson plans for teaching survival and life skills that help clients become self-sufficient while concurrently developing language, basic skills and progress toward the GED. Developed in El Paso with a bilingual clientele, the curriculum has also been field tested throughout the state in various geographic

locations with representation from many different ethnic and language minorities. A major goal of Project Forward is to disseminate the curriculum and train instructors for its implementation. While transitional issues are difficult to address specifically through the program because project staff have little control over what is actually done in local programs, transitional strategies are provided for learners through lessons in four units. The units of personal discovery, education, career and empowerment are specifically designed to help learners identify and get to their next educational steps.

Transition in the workplace program "The Cutting Edge" has been hard to define. First, it has been difficult to get business partners to identify their expectations regarding transition of workers because they are unsure of exactly what they want, and because transition can be a delicate issue in the workplace. Transition for "what" becomes a key question — new jobs and structures, retraining for displaced workers, or more education that could cause turnover problems. It has been frustrating for staff to develop transitional programs when dealing with the unknown. Therefore, the staff of "The Cutting Edge" have tried to build strategies for independent learning in the curriculum that will help workers cope with the changing workplace or for retraining programs as well as help them to identify their educational goals. In addition, the program employs a vocational guidance specialist to link workers with other educational or vocational programs that will help them achieve their goals.

Summary

Dealing with transitional issues is not an easy task. It takes a great deal of program introspection and constant interaction with the learners and other service providers. Programs must have an evaluation process to discover if learners are progressing appropriately and if they are progressing according to what they want to achieve. Staff who are responsible for helping learners progress to more advanced programs must be assigned to assist learners with transitions. "Hands on" or experiential curriculum that helps learners identify next educational steps, develop plans for those next steps, and achieve those plans is crucial. Appropriate support services must be part of the transitional system as well. Staff at all levels must be involved in and work out transitional barriers that occur when learners are sent or received by programs. They must advocate for eliminating barriers that are exclusionary or restrictive. Developing transitional systems for learners is not simple, but through effective collaboration with the many players involved in providing literacy, transitional efforts can be improved.

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Learner Portfolios to Support Transitions in Adult Education

Jane Braunger
Sylvia Hart-Landsberg
Stephen Reder
Literacy, Language and Communication Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Portland, Oregon

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Jane Braunger
Sylvia Hart-Landsberg
Stephen Reder[1]
Literacy, Language and Communication Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Portland, Oregon

Introduction

Transitions from one learning setting to another can be a big problem for adults, because each setting has its own expectations and challenges. Portfolios, as collections of student work that students select with their tutors or teachers according to their program' s guidelines, can go a long way toward smoothing these transitions. The student carries the portfolio to the new situation and uses it to help her communicate the kinds of learning activities she has been engaged in and the knowledge and skills she has developed, as well as her interests, strengths and needs.

Tutorial Student Brittany Wilson

In the literacy resource center where they meet weekly, Brittany Wilson and her tutor, Roger Lee, have found a quiet corner to start Brittany's learning portfolio. The two pour over a folder with all Brittany's papers and other learning products they have kept since they started working together six weeks ago. Brittany had come to the tutorial program to work on basic reading, writing, and math skills. Having quit high school in ninth grade with relatively limited skills, she was having trouble finding a job.

Roger has recently participated in a training for using portfolios to increase students' ownership and provide evidence of learning that students can take with them when they move on to new learning settings. Today, he and Brittany are following the program's one-page guideline for selecting pieces from the folder to create a portfolio that: 1) encourages the student's and tutor's reflections on the learning process, 2) showcases the student's best efforts, and 3) suggests further instructional activities. A written statement of these purposes is included in each portfolio, so that a teacher, tutor, or employer looking at it can interpret and base decisions on it.

Up to this point in the program Brittany has enjoyed the way its teaching and learning approach incorporates diverse activities and gives her a say in choosing them. However, she finds this session, the first in which she and Roger have done a systematic review of her work, inspires her confidence more than any previous session. Having a tangible collection of materials that reveals her progress convinces her that her work is worthwhile, and she looks forward to showing it to others. Among the pieces Brittany and Roger choose to represent her learning are: a multi-media project on the Vietnam War (a short report on the issues and outcome of the war, a map, and sketches with captions); a journal entry on the recent heat wave; a list of reading materials and workbooks she has completed; a hypothetical personal budget applying addition and subtraction skills; a beauty school advertisement that Brittany found in the newspaper while pursuing career information; and a written self reflection on the learning these products represent. To this collection Roger adds a written overview chronicling their course of study together and his observations of Brittany's learning style and progress.

Classroom Student Luis Morales

Luis Morales and his classroom teacher Maria Jackson page slowly through Luis's learning portfolio. The rest of the class is working in small groups on a topic that Maria introduced earlier. Luis brought the portfolio from the tutoring program he left over a year ago in order to take care of his son while his wife worked. Creating the portfolio had been a central activity for instruction and assessment. Last week Maria called to tell him that his name was at the top of the waiting list for her class, the only one offered at the time he can attend. Not having been in a classroom since elementary school, Luis is glad to have the portfolio for support in communicating to his teacher the kinds and levels of abilities he was developing with his tutor.

Staff on the tutorial program in which Luis participated and the classroom program he is entering have worked together to lay out their shared purposes and format for portfolios. So Maria knows that this portfolio conference with Luis will: 1) document Luis's tutorial learning activities (teaching approaches and materials, subjects, and student interests); 2) review his progress; and 3) provide information for setting education and career goals.

As a warm-up, Maria first asks Luis to read aloud his favorite piece, a composition on his toddler's development. After they've talked about the content, he shows her the rough drafts, revealing the grammar and spelling problems he solved to create the finished product. Then Luis leads Maria through the entire portfolio. The contents are arranged chronologically to show his growth. Included are: a taped account of Luis's childhood in Mexico (which he plans to save for his son to hear when he's older); a hypothetical menu for a sandwich shop, with descriptions and prices for each dish (fitting in with his interest in a career in food service); a page of math word problems with calculations and solutions; a floor plan of Luis's apartment, drawn to scale; a record of his standardized test scores; a reading log on short novels he has read; a draft of a resume he was learning how to type on the computer; and a list of computer games Luis feels are useful to his learning, including *Oregon Trail* and *Sim City*.

The promise of portfolios, however, reaches beyond their support for students during the transition. Creating a portfolio and presenting it to a tutor or teacher in a new setting, increases a student's ownership in her work. At the same time, the tutor or teacher is relating the tutorial or classroom activities to their future applications in education, work, and family life. Thus, well-designed systems for using portfolios within and among adult education programs not only facilitate transitions but also improve education before and after transitions. One way they do this is by broadening the definition of literacy to include the application of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics in many pursuits.

Potential uses for portfolios are rich and varied. The two boxed vignettes illustrate some of the ways students and professionals create and confer over them. These sketches foreshadow later sections on learner-centered education, the benefits of portfolios for transitions, and implementation issues.

For both Luis and Maria, this conference is more than an opportunity to view Luis' s academic work. The portfolio also is a prompt for sharing ideas about what education should be like and their own roles in it. In addition, Maria makes sure that she gets precise information for guiding Luis' s instruction. Her method for doing this is to use a checklist she has devised on teaching approaches, materials, and subjects that Luis mentions as they go through the portfolio. The form includes ample space for her notes about Luis' s apparent learning characteristics and possible next steps in schooling and career planning. Luis helps Maria make these notes, as she asks him about his progress and plans.

In these scenarios students and staff use portfolios for support during the transition from tutorial to classroom settings. We can imagine other situations where moving from one classroom to another is the challenge. Indeed, both tutorial and classroom contexts vary so much that a strategy for smoothing any change from one setting to another is

welcome. As the next section discusses, in any such transition, putting the learner at the center is the key to effective adult education.

Learner-Centered Instruction and Assessment

The transaction model of education. Portfolio practices place the student squarely in the center of instructional activities. This is in line with a model of education as a social *transaction* in which the student actively makes meaning by interacting with the environment. The model is based on researchers' and practitioners' observations that an environment with challenging, purposeful work supports learning. Teaching personnel, class, materials, and the student's own past experience and expectations form that environment. Key assumptions about learning embedded in this view are that: 1) The learner constructs her own knowledge, 2) Social interaction is essential to language and literacy learning, 3) Literacy, like language, is learned in meaningful use, not in the practice of isolated skills, 4) Risk-taking, hence errors, are essential in learning, and 5) Reading, writing, speaking, and listening develop interdependently (Vygotsky, 1978).

The transaction view of teaching and learning contrasts sharply with the more traditional *transmission* model which casts students in the relatively passive role of receiving knowledge from experts. This transformation in education theory, essentially shifting the focus from the teacher or tutor to the student, is behind many recent efforts at education reform, especially from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

An additional principal that contributes to the transaction model of learning is that learning is founded on learners' engagement in subjects that are significant to them. The idea is that adults extend their skills and understandings by studying topics with potential to affect important dimensions of their lives, e.g., work, health, and family (Freire, 1973). Teaching and learning along these lines is based on a concept of education as a mutual process in which both teacher and learner use literacy and other skills to create meaning and solve important problems. Again, the key to this kind of teaching is creating conditions for the learner to develop new skills and understandings by applying them in ways that have meaning to him.

Unfortunately, for many adults with beginning literacy needs, current instructional programs don't always provide students this crucial experience of taking charge of their own learning. When they leave one learning context (a tutorial session, say, or a classroom with highly individualized instruction), their successful transition to a different context may be hampered by their lack of understanding of learning as a process rather than as practice in isolated skills. In most tutorial and classroom situations students have neither evaluated their works as evidence of a body of knowledge and a set of abilities nor collected samples to take to the next learning setting.

Learner-centered assessment. Current trends in assessment reflect these shifts in thinking about education. The approach to assessment which has been dominant for about 30 years (from kindergarten through grade 12 as well as in adult basic education programs) relies heavily on pre- and post-testing of isolated skills and follows an instructional program that moves through a pre-determined skill sequence. Behaviorism, the operating philosophy behind such assessment, emphasizes transmission rather than transaction of knowledge. Knowledge is seen as something that experts establish and learners, with teacher reinforcement, acquire. Learning proceeds from part to whole; students master discrete skills or bits of knowledge before putting them together in whole sequences. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are separate subjects, each subdivided for instruction and testing in its component skills.

During the past 15 to 20 years the concept of learning as students' construction of meaning in the process of social interaction has had a profound effect on assessment, especially in the early school years. Learner-

centered assessment focuses on real-world uses of literacy rather than decontextualized tests of isolated skills. For example, the sequence of drafts characterizes the grammar and spelling improvements a student has made in a piece of writing. Similarly, a composition manifests writing skills, information, and comprehension of a complex topic. This kind of assessment moves away from factual recall. Students may choose some subjects for inquiry and determine purposes and audiences for their writing. As students make more decisions, self-assessment becomes a vital aspect of the assessment process: New approaches let learners have a say about ways to demonstrate their learning. Since the activities and products assessed do not focus on isolated skills and information, assessment becomes a useful instructional activity. It's an opportunity to clarify new understandings, confirm recently developed skills, and set the next learning goals. Thus, assessment and instructional activities dovetail.

Portfolios to Support Transitions in Adult Education

Learner-centered instruction and assessment have great power for reducing discontinuities that students experience as a result of transitions between and within programs. A student who is aware of her own learning process and directs her own study based on that awareness is well adapted to grow during transitions in their education. Portfolio practices can be an important way to center education on students (Fingeret, 1993). This enables them to navigate transitions more successfully. The accomplishment of putting together a record of one's own work validates recent learning experiences and boosts confidence for taking more control of selecting and designing next experiences. This ownership increases the likelihood that the student can transfer the new competencies to a variety of settings, including the workplace. This section describes the advantages of portfolios for students, tutors and teachers, collaborative staff groups, and program administrators.

Benefits for Students

Portfolios put learners in the driver's seat of their own transitions. The responsibility of using professional guidance to create and present their own portfolios prepares students to leave one setting and increases their control when adjusting to a new one. In addition, thinking about their skills in one setting orients them toward thinking about skills as something to be applied, not only in the next classroom, but also in diverse settings throughout their lives. Thus, for example, a student reviewing his portfolio to see how he has applied his reading skills in tutorial work might begin to think about applying his reading skills down the road, perhaps to prepare for the G.E.D. or study in a workplace training program.

Portfolios Encourage Reflection About Learning and Application of Skills. As a student gains authority over her own education, she needs to think about her learning style and the outcomes of her study. This leads to questions about applying and extending the new knowledge in school, work, and home life. For tutors and teachers as well, the student's active participation in the portfolio process stimulates reflection on the ways students learn and use what they study.

Portfolios Celebrate Learners' Progress. For many adults the journey to greater literacy competence, and perhaps to a G.E.D. or a career goal, seems like a long haul. Using a portfolio is a way to mark progress and plan the next leg of the journey. Because it is shared, the portfolio process is a celebration of progress too. Thus it adds structure and meaning to a route that can otherwise be daunting.

Portfolios Help Students to Share Their Work. Group instruction can be traumatic for

individuals who are used to the relative privacy of one-on-one tutoring. Many don't want other students to see their learning difficulties. Portfolios ease learners into the practice of sharing literacy activities and products. As students select pieces with their tutor or teacher they already are opening their work to view. And they are preparing to present it to another teacher or tutor, in a future learning setting. As they consider what these pieces say about their learning, they become more deeply involved in the social interaction that is the crux of literacy. The interaction around the portfolio, then, helps them become accustomed to the more public literacy practices common in classes and employment.

Portfolios Raise Everyone's Expectations for Student Success. Creating and using portfolios is a highly professional endeavor that increases the expertise, self-esteem, and status of everyone using them. This enhanced professionalism encourages students, tutors, and teachers to design and carry out activities that reap every possible educational benefit instead of just going through the motions of instruction and assessment. Further, portfolios remind students that their education is related to their personal aspirations, that gaining and documenting knowledge opens many roads to achievement.

Benefits for Tutors and Teachers

Portfolios boost the effectiveness of other teaching activities. As tutors and teachers work closely with students on portfolios, they become aware of adult learning processes and ways to improve teaching. This student/teacher collaboration also highlights relationships between learning activities and their relevance to further learning and to workplace settings. For example, in considering criteria for selecting pieces to go in portfolios, a tutor or teacher faces critical questions about teaching approaches. The questions that arise include: What literacy skills and subjects will particular learners require in other spheres of their lives? Which instructional media (e.g., workbooks, computers, texts, films, and magazines) will teach these skills and content best? Which teaching methods (e.g., cooperative groups, direct instruction, individualized programs) are best suited to certain aims? What are the criteria of excellence in various types of learning products?

Portfolios Increase the Power of Assessment. Students often know best what they can do, so their input increases the quality of assessment information. In addition, the process of collecting and characterizing pieces for a folder blends assessment with instruction, enriching each. Finally, portfolios, by opening the door to many types of products and experiences, diversify the kinds of skills and understandings on which assessment is based.

Portfolios Strengthen Student/Teacher Relationships. First, portfolio production changes teachers' and tutors' perceptions of students. A portfolio depicts a student as a complex individual cultivating a multitude of overlapping abilities that draw on a rich past and point toward a future with interesting possibilities. Cooperating with another adult to interpret an assortment of poems, math problems, and so forth, is fun. Partners in this task become multi-dimensional people to each other. Secondly, the process of portfolio work changes the teachers' and tutors' interactions with the learners. Students using portfolios are custodians of their own progress, and their tutors and teachers become learning guides who inspire, structure, and encourage learning.

Portfolios Enhance Tutors' and Teachers' Professionalism. Portfolios support professional work by suggesting creative ways to design curriculum. One innovative way for tutors and teachers to benefit from using portfolios with their students is to keep portfolios on their own professional growth. Topics to investigate with the aid of a tutor or teacher portfolio include the characteristics of adult learning, individual and cultural

diversity in learning styles, and ways to elicit more student talk during group discussions. By keeping a portfolio, professionals come to see that they are learners too, so they gain insight into their students' learning.

Portfolios Highlight the Strengths of Tutorial Instruction. Tutors are essential to the adult education system. Much of their work is either in line with the transactional model of education or easily adaptable to it: Tutorial sessions base learning in social interaction between the tutor and the learner, and the learner is the center of the activity. Thus, adding portfolio development to tutors' responsibilities can recognize and improve their abilities to guide learning. By harnessing tutors' professional abilities, this additional assignment may also deepen their commitment.

Benefits for Collaborative Staff Groups

Portfolios stimulate discussion of philosophical differences. It is impossible for tutors and teachers who collaborate around portfolios to hide their disagreements about what learning is and how it can be advanced. Staff start to share vital information about their work. Ideas arise for improving their practices. This dialogue improves more than transitions. By emphasizing the importance of quality and continuity in education before and after transitions, it begins to address the pedagogical principles behind practices.

Portfolios Provide a Focus for Staff Training and Teamwork. Successful teamwork often depends on having a focus. Portfolios, as a specific innovation, provide that focus. Their effect is wider than one innovation, however, for they initiate staff discussion about related practices. In determining procedures for making placement decisions, for example, some staff members in each service delivery system become familiar with others' levels of comfort and styles with portfolios, as well as their reasons for their choices. This leads to review and renewal of teaching approaches.

Portfolios Spur Group Training and Specialization. Decision-making regarding portfolios can be a vehicle for renewing interest in professional issues and identifying potential areas for training and development, including group process skills, integrated curriculum, and computer instruction. A fresh look at a staff's needs for more training also opens the door for individual members to specialize. In this way, the entire group's abilities become broader, and their interdependence becomes an asset.

Portfolios Can be Part of a Larger Program Improvement Process. In recent years many elementary, middle, and high schools have engaged in successful processes for improvement. Although there are many important differences between K through 12 schools and adult education programs, these successes suggest the central role portfolio projects might play in wider reform efforts. The elementary and secondary experiences have demonstrated clearly that certain factors make it possible to plan and carry out reform. The essential ingredients for reform include opportunities for staff to plan and set reasonable goals, develop leadership abilities, and take risks without fear of criticism. Portfolio projects have been a key goal in some of these school renewal cases. As a worthy, yet manageable, goal, a system for using portfolios leads in other reforms.

Benefits for Program Administrators

Portfolios provide a clear focus for linking programs. The number and diversity of literacy volunteer and Adult Basic Education programs in a region sometimes makes it difficult to create links among learning settings (U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education and National Alliance of Business, Undated). As a result, adult education staff often lack systematic ways of exchanging information about the types of classes students have attended or their accomplishments, challenges, learning styles, and needs.

One strategy for increasing communication between and within adult learning programs is to set a precise goal like implementing portfolios. Since reaching this goal helps students adapt to new tutorial situations, classes, and programs, it rewards collaboration and sets the stage for more.

Portfolios Introduce Improvements with Relatively Low Costs. There are several ways that portfolios are efficient in using program time, money, and other resources. The expenses of implementing portfolios are largely the costs of training staff and providing time for collaboration. If these categories are already in the budget, portfolios may not add expenses as much as provide a clear direction for efforts that already exist, for example to align instruction and assessment. In the case that training and collaboration are new expenses, programs may find that developing a portfolio system is more cost-effective than training mentors, devising new record-keeping systems, or other ways to ease the transition.

In Washington state, ABE teachers can provide alternative assessment data to satisfy mandated core competencies (Adult Basic and Literacy Educators, 1990). Initial work with alternative assessments, including portfolios, is well-received by tutors and teachers. Instead of increasing their workload, these assessments increase their efficiency by allowing them to evaluate learning in the context of instruction.

Implementation Issues & Approaches

Portfolios as Process and Product

Portfolios are living documents in two ways: 1) They are used regularly in instruction as tutors or teachers and students consult them to confirm progress, review learning to date and decide on next steps, and 2) Their contents change as representative samples of the learner' s work, learner self-reflection pieces, and records of portfolio conferences between tutor or teacher and learner are added.

Portfolios are thus both a *process* of learner-centered assessment and the *product* which contains the evidence of the learner' s progress toward the agreed-upon goals. It is important for teachers and tutors to participate in staff development or training that supports them in learning to incorporate the portfolio process into their teaching. Such training should engage them as learning guides in asking essential questions about the purposes of portfolios, their contents, and their audiences. The place to start is with an exploration of the assumptions about learning and assessment which teachers and tutors currently hold. Next, participants should see where their current beliefs match the assumptions about learning and assessment which underlie portfolio assessment. Coming to a shared understanding about the philosophy guiding portfolio assessment is a crucial first step.

Common Assumptions Underlying Portfolio Practices

From primary grades through adult education, programs using portfolio assessment share beliefs about the purposes of portfolios, the central role of self-reflection in learning, and the kinds of information on learning that portfolios should contain. This section briefly describes these shared beliefs.

The functions and purposes of portfolios are to:

- ***serve as a learning tool.*** Portfolios function both as a learning tool and as a record-keeping device. They are used regularly for review of material, decisions about next steps in the learning, and confirmation of skills and strategies learned to date. So portfolios blend assessment and instruction by allowing the learner to reflect regularly, alone and with the teacher or tutor, on what he knows and can do and how he learned it. Portfolios emphasize learners' strengths rather than their deficiencies; this makes portfolios strong motivators for learning.

• ***foster collaboration between learners and their tutors or teachers.*** The learner and the tutor or teacher collaboratively formulate the goals for the portfolio as well as the criteria for selection and assessment of its contents. A record of this goal-setting process may be a first entry for the portfolio, with subsequent revisions, as appropriate, added over time.

The learner' s central role in producing portfolios develops:

• ***learner ownership***. The learner really owns both the learning experiences and the portfolio documents which reflect them. Portfolios contain students' own reflections about themselves as learners. Learners help to set their own goals and choose work samples as evidence of growth (Paulson & Paulson, 1991). These responsibilities generate a whole new orientation toward study and success that boosts self-direction and self-esteem.

• ***self-assessment.*** In working with portfolios, learners become more reflective about their learning. They develop and apply standards for judging the quality of their own work. This self-assessment, the heart of the portfolio process, sets portfolios apart from teacher- or program-directed records of learner progress. "If someone else is always evaluating for you, you don't learn how to evaluate yourself" (National Council of Teachers of English, 1991).

Portfolios should contain evidence of:

• ***growth.*** Portfolio contents demonstrate to a variety of audiences, the learner' s progress toward agreed-upon goals. Portfolios may contain records of standardized assessments such as TABE or CASAS. But their real strength is in their direct evidence — in the form of the learner' s actual work — of progress toward desired outcomes. Portfolios need to be portable, so that learners can carry them to new learning settings. Since the collections represent learning over time that can move with the student through programs, they provide a base upon which to build.

• ***learning processes.*** Contents reveal learning strategies and abilities as well as products of learning. They may, for example, contain evidence of the learner' s problem-solving approaches in mathematics, his revision strategies in writing, and his method of reading challenging material to get the gist of it. Also important is the record portfolios contain of the learner' s process of self-assessment, his increased understanding of criteria to apply in judging the quality of his work. Following this self-assessment, learner and tutor or teacher may revise learning goals and document these changes in the portfolio.

• ***learning contexts and experiences.*** Contents reflect the approaches and materials used in the instructional program and relevant learning experiences outside of the instructional setting. The learner and a teacher in the new learning setting can see the contexts in which particular understandings and abilities were developed. Thus, the new learning setting can build on that foundation at the same time it may introduce the learner to new strategies and interactions in pursuit of his goals.

Collaboration in Developing Portfolios

Successful portfolio practices call for ongoing collaboration before, during, and after the implementation period. Teachers, tutors, program administrators, and representatives of learners need to be involved. Opportunities must be provided for the group to inform themselves about portfolios, make initial plans for their design and use, try out the new practices, and revise the plans based on their experiences. These aspects of implementation may not occur in neatly separated stages: Training, early planning, experimenting, and refining early plans may overlap. Participants' questions should drive the instruction, with plenty of time for discussion. This gives collaborative groups an opportunity to continually refine their understandings as they try out the new strategies with learners.

Learning about portfolios. One of the group's first tasks is to investigate the need for portfolios. What can they add to a program or programs (in both instruction and assessment) that isn't already provided by current teaching approaches and data? Once the group has determined that portfolios will enhance both learning and assessment, an important step is to determine the need for staff development and training. What information must tutors and teachers have in order to feel comfortable about beginning to use portfolios? How can this information be provided in a supportive context that promotes risk-taking among instructors and models this reflective process for the learners?

The processes of learning about and using portfolios are interdependent. That is, an initial training should get the ball rolling with the previously mentioned exploration of assumptions about learning and assessment followed by goal-setting about purposes for portfolio use and about training processes. But the real learning will occur over time as teachers and tutors try out portfolios in their teaching and continually expand their understandings in collaborative follow-up sessions to which they bring samples — and stories — of their experiences with portfolios.

Topics for Learning About Portfolios. Certain topics not only usher in excellent portfolio use, but also extend learning to wider instructional and assessment issues. The many topics training might address include ways to:

- ***improve the student's role in directing her own education.*** Participants might study ways to move students to the center of the learning experience (Pace, 1993); develop students' ability to be reflective about their learning; and involve students in designing and refining portfolio practices (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991).
- ***introduce new forms of instruction.*** Workshops could focus on designing learning experiences that develop confidence and independence as they expand students' ranges of learning experiences (Barrs, Ellis, Hester, & Thomas, 1990). Or, for another example, collaborative groups could work on embedding skill and strategy instruction in purposeful uses of literacy and mathematics.
- ***revise assessment purposes and practices.*** Training goals could be to develop criteria for assessing growth in reading, writing, mathematics, study skills and general learning strategies; use anecdotal records and checklists for cultivating insight into students' learning; or interweave assessment and instruction so that each enhances the other.

Planning the Purposes, Contents, and Uses of Portfolios. A major challenge for the group implementing portfolios is to devise a system that is appropriate to the context. Although the general aim of portfolios is to provide a detailed picture of learners' goals, experiences and accomplishments, local decisions determine the more particular *purposes* to which portfolios are tied. The common types of portfolios and the purposes they serve (Valencia & Place, 1993) are:

- ***showcase.*** The student has primary ownership and responsibility to select his best work. This kind of portfolio celebrates the student's accomplishments and abilities. (In the earlier vignette, this was the primary function of Brittany's portfolio.)
- ***documentation.*** The learner and the teacher or tutor select work as evidence of student progress and experiences. Its aim is to build a rich description of the individual student's learning strengths and needs without specific attention to clearly established scoring criteria.
- ***evaluation.*** Most of the contents are selected by the teacher or tutor and demonstrate outcomes or criteria established for learners in the program. Most of the contents are specified and scored, or evaluated in some other way.
- ***process.*** Ongoing work toward a larger project or body of learning is chronicled and commented on by the learner. The emphasis here is on learning strategies.

- ***composite.*** Many of the above purposes are combined. This portfolio can showcase learners' best work, document movement toward goals, evaluate growth, and provide information on the learning process.

Once participants have established the purposes of portfolios, they need to decide what *contents* will fulfill these purposes. This requires setting guidelines for the categories of learning products to be collected and the criteria for selecting specific pieces to fill these categories. These categories and criteria should recognize the knowledge areas and learning outcomes that matter in students' lives. An example, illustrated in the vignette about Brittany, is the beauty school advertisement she put in the portfolio because it was related to her career aim. Similarly, categories and the criteria for choosing particular works ought to constitute real evidence of growth toward agreed-upon goals. Luis, in the other vignette, followed this principle when he included the rough drafts and final version of his composition. In addition to identifying portfolio contents and ways to select them, participants working on the guidelines should make a plan for organizing and annotating the contents. This plan needs to be sensitive to the purposes and the audiences involved (Pace, 1993). A framework for portfolio contents and use will evolve as participants gain experience that is right for their program context. Categories of learning products and other information which might be represented include:

- ***products or work samples*** — writing samples, journal entries (in reading and mathematics), interest inventories, a list of books read, written retellings of texts (or audio tapes of oral retellings), math solutions to open-ended questions, a literacy or mathematics autobiography, a resume. Such samples provide evidence of growth over time and of the breadth of literacy and mathematics experiences the learner is accumulating (e.g. reading in a variety of texts, writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, applying mathematics in a number of contexts).
- ***records of learning processes, strategies*** — teacher observations, anecdotal records, and conference notes. Student records (either written or dictated) of processes used in problem solving, or in completing a project, and of strategies learned since entry into the program are valuable here, too. Examples include reading strategies, writing strategies, and learning processes.
- ***self-reflection samples*** — passages attached to student-selected products that explain why they were chosen, i.e., the growth they exhibit. Reflections on personal and career goals might be included here. Learners can also write an introduction to the portfolios as a whole to suggest ways that readers should approach the material.

A complex set of decisions needs to be made about the *uses* to which students, tutors, teachers, and other decision makers will put portfolios. The people, schedules, circumstances, and approaches for portfolio conferences are among the many issues that planners need to address. Again, sensitivity to the local needs should be the foundation for these decisions.

The rights and responsibilities of people using portfolios must be discussed early on and revisited as portfolios are implemented. Who will have access to the portfolio? On the question of access, teachers or tutors and students might decide that the portfolio belongs to the learner but should be located at the learning site so that tutor or teacher and learner can regularly confer about it. They can add records of initial and ongoing goal setting and review of portfolio materials.

The schedule for portfolio use in the learning setting is also important. How often should it be updated ? Should portfolio updates involve both the learner and the tutor or teacher? How much time should be spent in updating the portfolio? How long after entering a new situation should a student pull out his portfolio to be viewed? Is it

appropriate for the new teacher to view the portfolio without the learner presenting and explaining it? One criterion to use in scheduling work with the portfolio is the importance of its link to instruction. Learners will need to work frequently enough with their portfolios to reflect on their learning in ways that can drive instruction. But they should be able to see growth in their work and have enough new material to make selections for the portfolio, so weekly updates may be less useful than updates every month or six weeks.

Regular conferences between the tutor or teacher and the learner about the portfolio develop self-reflection and goal-setting abilities. In these sessions, they can review and update material, add the learner' s self-reflections, and revise learning goals. The learner develops skill in using the portfolio to illustrate his learning goals, experiences, and strengths in moving to another instructional setting. It is possible that the learner may take his portfolio to a program in which the staff is unfamiliar with portfolios for instruction and assessment. The learner' s ability to explain the significance of items in the portfolio is especially useful here; he can enter a new educational setting as an active learner, knowledgeable about his learning strategies and ready to set goals for the next stage in his learning journey. In this way, regular work with the portfolio in the instructional setting strengthens the learner' s ability to use the portfolio to his best advantage in a new learning setting.

Self-reflection becomes a crucial component in instruction that uses portfolios. The more the learner is regularly involved in reflecting on his learning, the more appropriate a portfolio will be as an assessment tool. Thus, self-reflection, recognition of learning accomplishments and needs, and awareness of learning processes should be central to the instructional experience if portfolios are to support and document significant learner outcomes. One high school English student in a class beginning to use portfolios noted, "It's a good thing we write a lot and talk about our writing in here; I'd sure hate to have only sentence-combining exercises to choose from in putting things in my portfolio." As noted above, regular portfolio conferences and updates build this self-assessment into the learning cycle.

The adult learner is the owner of the portfolio, even though tutors or teachers may have access to it, as discussed in the earlier section. The advantage of learner ownership in portfolios becomes increasingly evident as learners move from one kind of tutorial or classroom experience to another. In using the portfolios, students speak to their own learning goals, accomplishments, processes, and anticipated next steps. They use their portfolios to tell a rich story of themselves as learners. Thus, the portfolio can provide tangible support in asserting learners' authority over their own education.

Using portfolios with learners. One way to begin using portfolios with learners and at the same time gather information to improve the portfolio program is through action research by tutors and teachers. In action research, a teacher' s question or interest in solving some instructional problem drives her to study the issue in her own practice; she actively studies the situation and gathers information in her own classroom, for example. A tutor or teacher beginning to work with portfolios will find many questions worth exploring: How can I help the learner gain insight into his learning processes? What criteria is the learner using to select work for the portfolio? Is the learner able to take responsibility for most of the talking in our portfolio conferences? What kind of learning materials seem to support the portfolio collection? How useful are my skills checklists to the learner' s self-assessments? As staff work with portfolios new questions for their continued research will arise, and the cycle of improving portfolio programs through tutors and teachers researching their own practice will continue.

A core group can pilot this action research approach. After initial training, they try out portfolio processes with their students, and regularly meet to share developments and learn additional strategies for effective portfolio use. By studying the impact of portfolio assessment on their teaching and students' learning, they can actually learn how to use the process to its best advantage in their instructional setting. Such an approach emphasizes the exploratory nature of portfolio development and its value to program development. And as teachers, tutors, and trainers convene for ongoing sessions, they can share examples of portfolios that their students are in the process of developing. Then they can move on to raise new questions for their action research and identify additional support they need.

Again, at this point in the implementation process, collaboration is paramount in making portfolios work. Collaboration can provide a forum for discussing the feedback these trials provide, a process for deciding how to react to the new information, and continual opportunities for more training (in the form of workshops, visits to other program sites, conferences, observations, and similar avenues to learning).

Conclusion

Transitions in adult education do not necessarily constitute barriers to learning. From the perspective of a program or consortium of programs implementing portfolios, transitions represent opportunities to extend learning and apply it to learners' needs in many areas of their lives — family, workplace, and community. Portfolios create a bridge across transitions. Adults develop ownership of the education process as they select and interpret samples of their work that reflect the rich diversity of their abilities and learnings. As they hone the skills *they* value and deepen the understandings *they* want to cultivate, students put their education in service of their needs as lifelong learners.

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[1] We are grateful for the ideas and suggestions, in response to an earlier draft of this paper, from the following Oregon adult literacy educators: Lee Braymen-Cleary, Portland Community College Literacy Line; Beverly Brookens, Oregon Literacy, Inc.; Marie Hermanson, Portland Community College Volunteer Tutor Program; Shirley Randles, Oregon Literacy, Inc.; Cynthia Stadel, Multnomah County Department of Community Corrections; Sharlene Walker, Oregon Office of Community College Services.

Strategies for Building Collaborative Relationships and Articulated Programs

Judith Alamprese
COSMOS Corporation
Washington, DC

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TRANSITIONS

Strategies for Building Collaborative Relationships and Articulated Programs

Judith A. Alamprese
COSMOS Corporation
Washington, DC

Introduction

The expansion of the nation's adult education system during the past decade has underscored the need for coordination between volunteer literacy and publically-funded adult education programs. Of particular note has been the development of the volunteer literacy sector, with over 150,000 volunteers currently serving as literacy tutors (Tenenbaum and Strang, 1992). Volunteers are not only providing instructional services through their own organizations, but also are being utilized in publically-funded adult education programs (Development Associates, 1992). With this expansion in volunteer literacy programs has come the awareness that services must be provided to foster learners' ongoing participation in adult education, particularly in higher levels of instruction.

The issue of learner transition in adult education programs has become increasingly important as state adult education offices undertake program improvement efforts and determine effective ways for local adult programs to serve the diverse group of adults who are requesting literacy and basic skills services. The evaluation of Connecticut's five-year adult education program improvement initiative, for example, indicated that while the overall quality of adult education services in the state had increased as a result of extensive staff development and program policy changes, there was an ongoing need to develop better linkages between volunteer and state-funded programs to foster learner articulation (Alamprese, 1993). Furthermore, this call for coordination between volunteer literacy and adult education programs was highlighted in the recent descriptive study of volunteer literacy programs (Tenenbaum and Strang, op. cit.). The findings from this study showed that while volunteer programs acknowledged the need to work with other organizations to transition learners, formal activities in this area were in the early stages of development. Another impetus for transition services are the new initiatives in welfare reform and job training. As the number of clients mandated to participate in literacy and adult education programs expands, so will the need for services that can assist clients in moving from literacy classes to basic skills, English-as-a-second-language (ESL), or high school completion programs.

Historically, a number of barriers has inhibited the development of transition programs in adult education. Within the publically-funded adult education system, there have been few incentives for local programs to enter into collaborative relationships with volunteer programs. Since many adult education programs have waiting lists of clients seeking services, there is little organizational incentive to recruit additional clients from volunteer settings. Additionally, staff in adult education programs often do not have the time to counsel clients about the opportunities for further instruction because of

their heavy client loads or their lack of information about other educational programs. From the perspective of the volunteer sector, it sometimes is difficult to transition learners to adult education programs because of limited information or understanding about the operation of these services. In spite of these barriers, volunteer literacy and publically-funded adult education programs are beginning to work together to enhance the opportunities for continuing education for their clients.

While little written information exists about the transition activities that are being undertaken, the documentation that is available often describes volunteer tutor or paid instructors' individual efforts in working with clients in providing counseling and referral services. Frequently, these activities are initiated by individuals and are not necessarily carried out systematically as part of an organization's services. An alternative strategy for addressing the transition issue that is emerging is an organization's activities in developing policies or practices that support program-wide efforts to assist clients in moving from one service to another. One example of this type of strategy is when a state adult education office funds training that involves staff from both volunteer literacy and state-funded adult education programs, and which provides information or methods that can be used to promote clients' ongoing participation in education.

As volunteer literacy and adult education programs attempt to address their clients' complex array of needs, an understanding of the types of organizational-level strategies that can be used to promote client transition becomes more critical. This paper describes three such strategies that have been used by state and local organizations, and provides illustrative examples from programs affiliated with the two national volunteer organizations--Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), and from programs supported with federal adult education funds. Also discussed in the paper are actions that state adult education and volunteer offices can take to foster program coordination at the local level.

Elements of Effective Transition Programs

Recent research on interagency coordination in adult education provides some insights for understanding the elements that comprise effective transition programs in volunteer literacy and adult education programs (Alamprese, Brigham, and Sivilli, 1992). Most transition programs involve at least two entities working together on behalf of a client. These entities may be either individuals or organizations. When organizations attempt to work together--whether at the state or local level--it appears that two types of coordination strategies are important. One is the strategies that organizations use to develop relationships, and the other is the communication mechanisms that are used to sustain these relationships.

Assessing Benefits of a Relationship. The findings from studies regarding the factors organizations consider in deciding whether to work together and the methods they use to structure a relationship provide guidance that can be applied to the development of transition programs. An initial step that organizations take in developing a relationship is to determine the benefits and costs of exchanging resources, information, or services. Three factors concerning the perceived benefits and costs of a relationship are important in organizational as well as individual development of relationships. These are: 1) the extent to which the parties involved view the relationship as reciprocal (Gouldner, 1959); 2) the extent to which the benefits of engaging in a relationship are perceived to be at least equal to or more than the costs (Blau, 1964); and 3) the extent to which the benefits are perceived to be proportional to the investment that is made in establishing a relationship (Homans, 1961). In the case of transition programs, both the volunteer literacy and the adult education programs must decide that the payoff from working together in providing services such as an articulated instructional program or client

cross-referral outweigh the effort that is needed to develop and maintain such services.

Developing Agreements. Once organizations have decided that it is beneficial to work together, the next step is to determine the boundaries of the relationship. Organizations frequently set boundaries by developing formal and informal agreements, which specify the resources that they are to exchange. When organizations transfer fiscal resources or staff, then written, formal agreements usually are required. Other types of resource exchanges, such as information sharing, generally are informal agreements among staff that are based on personal knowledge and trust.

Formal agreements, such as memoranda of understanding, help to clarify organizations' expectations regarding the outcomes from working together and can be used as a check when issues arise regarding the balance of perceived benefits in the relationship. Informal agreements between organizations often are adapted to meet the changing needs of the organizations and can be the first step in establishing a formal arrangement between organizations. In building transition programs, most programs would likely begin with informal agreements among staff that allow them to work together on a specific issue. For example, the development of information about the services available in a community is a important component of many literacy transition programs. Staff can agree informally to share information as well as to cross-refer clients. Once organizations have had a positive experience carrying out an activity such as cross-referral of clients, they can move toward more structured, formal agreements that involve the exchange of fiscal or staff resources.

Creating Communication Mechanisms. The communication that takes place between organizations and their staff members is an important element in developing and sustaining interorganizational relationships. One process staff in organizations use when first collaborating is to develop a common set of goals or a joint vision about what they are to accomplish. Activities such as face-to-face communication through task forces, committees, or consortia provide staff with an opportunity to get to know one another and identify their similarities and differences. Through their discussions in these types of meetings, staff can form a common perspective about the services, resources, and information that are being coordinated. This consensus building, which often is a lengthy process, allows organizations to reach a point where they can carry out a joint activity.

Another form of communication that is helpful in building interorganizational relationships is that which takes place through individuals' formal and informal networks. Personnel from volunteer literacy and adult education programs often serve on the same community task forces or organizational committees, and have opportunities to build interpersonal relationships through these contacts. An evaluation of the Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) community task forces provided a number of examples of how representatives from volunteer literacy and adult education programs were able to come together to work toward a common goal while carrying out their respective organizations' missions (Alamprese, Schaff, and Brigham, 1987). More recently, state adult education offices have been engaged in interagency coordination activities with job training and social service agencies as states work to provided a system of integrated services to clients. The interpersonal networks among staff from these state agencies have been important elements in helping them develop agreements between agencies (Alamprese, Brigham, and Sivilli, op. cit.).

Providing Leadership. While the development of a common goal, working agreements, and methods for communicating are necessary steps for organizations to take in working together, another key ingredient for a successful interorganizational relationship is leadership. In the case of the development of transition programs, leadership can come from staff in state adult education or volunteer literacy offices, as well as from local volunteer literacy and adult education programs. When

created as an organizational strategy, a transition program must have the support of numerous individuals and is best led by an individual who has a view of the desired outcome. Leadership in this type of activity can take the form of state adult education and volunteer literacy offices collaborating to sponsor joint activities, such as staff training, or offering incentives to their respective constituencies to work together. State adult education office also can fund volunteer programs to provide instructional services. In this case, volunteer literacy programs must meet the federal reporting requirements. To assist volunteer programs in meeting these requirements, state adult education offices have made training and technical assistance in leaner assessment procedures available to staff from these programs. At the local level, leadership often is exhibited when a representative from either the volunteer or the public education sector initiates an activity that can help clients in their transition from one program to another.

Illustrative Transition Strategies

A number of the organizational activities that are being carried out in volunteer literacy and adult education programs exemplify effective strategies for transitioning adult learners across programs. Three of these strategies are discussed next. The first concerns activities at the state level, and includes the provision of staff training and the sharing of learner assessment data. The other two strategies have been initiated by local volunteer literacy and adult education programs. One is the development of bridge programs to facilitate learners' movement from one instructional service to another. The other strategy is the sharing of staff or staff functions between organizations.

Staff Training. In an effort to increase the quality of all staff providing literacy and adult education services, state adult education offices are providing opportunities for volunteer literacy staff to participate in state-sponsored training activities or are supporting the development of training materials for volunteers. For example, the Connecticut Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Education currently funds local affiliates of Connecticut's Literacy Volunteers of America state office. As a condition for funding, volunteer programs must meet the federal reporting requirements and collect program participant and learner assessment data that are part of the Connecticut Applied Performance Program (CAPP). To assist volunteer programs in meeting this requirement, LVA program staff are invited to participate in the ongoing training provided by the state-funded Adult Training and Development Network. LVA program staff also can receive technical assistance regarding the administration and interpretation of the CAPP assessment results.

In Oregon, the Office of Community College Services has supported a tutor training project that includes the development of training materials and the conduct of training sessions for tutors in state-funded volunteer programs. This project has enabled tutors from different sites to work together to understand the needs of learners who are in tutoring programs as well as in community college adult education programs.

These types of joint staff training efforts have a number of benefits. They are opportunities for staff to gain equal access to substantive information that can help both tutors and classroom-based instructors improve their instructional methods. The training also can help to reduce the barriers between organizations, since staff are able to learn about each other' s activities. Additionally, the training sessions may provide staff with an opportunity to develop interpersonal networks for sharing information and other resources.

Learner Assessment. The collection of learner assessment data is a key transition strategy that volunteer literacy programs increasingly are undertaking. Several LVA affiliates and Laubach councils, such as LVA of Connecticut, are conducting learner assessment as part of their condition for funding from state adult education offices. In Connecticut, the collection of CAPP data facilitates the transition of volunteer program

participants into classroom-based adult education programs since the data can be used to place learners in programs. The state LVA office also supports this data collection effort by maintaining a database that can be used by local programs to monitor their participants' progress.

The Oregon Office of Community College Services is sponsoring a pilot project in conjunction with Oregon Literacy, Inc., a state LLA council, to determine the types of learner assessment data that can be collected in state-funded volunteer programs. Volunteer program staff currently have the option of being trained in the use of the state's basic skills assessment procedures--the Basic Adult Skills Inventory System (BASIS). In addition, a number of volunteer programs are participating in the pilot project to assess the utility of a variety of assessment methods. These include skills checklists in English as a second language and basic skills, which are derived from the BASIS competencies. In addition, there is a professional judgement form that has a scale for assessing the characteristics of learners' participation in an instructional program, and a summary form that records learner demographic and performance data. Volunteer literacy program coordinators have been trained to use these assessment instruments and forms, and are working with tutors from their local programs to implement the assessment procedures. The results of the pilot project will be used to determine the feasibility of various assessment procedures and to set performance standards for learners in state-funded adult education programs.

The use of learner assessment procedures in volunteer literacy and adult education programs provides a common 8language and framework for staff from these organizations to discuss their clients' progress. The assessment data also enables volunteer staff to have a better understanding of the processes that are used in adult education programs to place learners in class levels and monitor their achievement.

Bridge Programs. Literacy volunteer programs have developed a number of activities to assist learners in moving from one instructional program to another. Washington Literacy's ESL Bridge Program is an example of this type of transition strategy. This program was developed as an informal practice that tutors use on a case-by-case basis to help ESL learners adjust to classes at the community or technical college. The tutors continue to meet with their learners for a period of time after a learner has enrolled in the new setting, and provide instructional support and opportunities for the learner to practice speaking the English language. Through this process, the tutor provides encouragement and assists the learner in working independently.

In another program sponsored by Washington Literacy, volunteers work with pre-GED (General Educational Development) students to provide supplemental instructional services to their community college classes. This ten-week program activity helps students who require additional assistance in preparing to take the GED.[1]

The Opportunity for Adult Reading, Inc. (OAR), a local LLA council in Cleveland, Tennessee, provides a model of bridge services that is increasingly common. The adult basic education (ABE) supervisor from the state-funded program works with the OAR director in organizing transitional services for basic education students who are moving from ABE I to ABE II classes. The OAR program then provides small-group classes and individual tutoring services for students during the summer months when ABE classes are not operating (Tenenbaum and Strang, op. cit.).

The operation of a successful bridge program requires leadership and a well-defined set of activities that the organizations involved in the program agree are useful to the learner. Furthermore, these activities depend on the ongoing collection of information about program services and learner needs. When implemented well, this type of transition program can be an effective strategy for transitioning learners.

Sharing of Staff Functions. Another type of emerging organizational transition strategy is volunteer programs' collaboration with

adult education programs to perform coordinated staff functions. The Volunteer Learning Program, which is part of the Fairfax County, Virginia Public Schools adult education program, is an illustrative example of this type of strategy. Tutors who are part of the Volunteer Learning Program provide instruction to Fairfax County adult education learners who are participating in the External Diploma Program (EDP). Since the EDP is an assessment program with no instructional component, the volunteer program provides a needed staff function in tutoring learners who are preparing to enter the final assessment phase of the EDP. Tutors are trained in the content matter covered in the EDP so that they can address learners' skill needs directly.

Tutors from the Volunteer Program also facilitate small groups of EDP learners as they proceed through the final assessment phase. In this instance, the EDP facilitator assists the learners in developing self-directed learning strategies and in working collaboratively with peers.[2]

This transition strategy is especially effective when the two collaborating programs are under the same organizational structure. In this case, the Volunteer Learning Program is part of the Fairfax County Public Schools, and staff from the volunteer program have worked in the adult education program. The existence of a prior network among staff and their knowledge about the programs involved are key factors accounting for the success of these efforts.

Another aspect of staff sharing is the diversity of roles that both volunteer and adult education staff can play in fostering transition programs. In addition to providing instructional services to learners, staff can carry out a number of the activities that have been found to be essential to the success of transition efforts. For example, a staff member can be responsible for the ongoing collection and distribution of information about educational and other community services that are available to adult learners. Rather than have this responsibility rest with individual tutors or instructional staff, a program might have a centralized process for information collection that can be more efficient and useful for all involved. A staff member also can be designated to become the local expert on developing formal agreements for an organization. This process can help to assure consistency in the formal arrangements that are made between organizations.

State Supports for Transition Programs

Critical to the success of transition programs between volunteer literacy and adult education programs at the local level is the role that state offices can play in fostering collaboration. Both state adult education offices and state volunteer literacy councils or affiliates can perform a variety of support functions that can be beneficial to local programs.

State adult education offices increasing are providing leadership in transition activities by supporting volunteer program staffs' participation in state-funded professional development activities. Similarly, state volunteer organizations are working collaboratively with these adult education offices in undertaking joint activities, such as learner assessment and data sharing projects, which can improve the quality of the staff and program services that are available.

By funding volunteer programs, state adult education offices can increase the quality and extent of the instructional services offered by volunteer literacy programs. State volunteer organizations also can encourage coordination between their local offices and state-funded adult education programs by providing training and technical assistance in the variety of transition strategies that are being carried out by volunteer literacy and adult education programs across the country.

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[1] Telephone interview with Chris Cassidy, Washington Literacy, March 21, 1994.

[2] Telephone interview with Mary Brookshire, Fairfax County, Virgina Volunteer Learning Program, March 21, 1994.